0 0001 4522547 0

780 Ma

Kansas City
Public Library

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

This Volume is for
REFERENCE USE ONLY

PUBLIC LIBRARY
KANSAS CITY
MO

PUBLIC LIBRARY
KANSAS CITY
MO

The Art of Music

A Comprehensive Library of Information for Music Lovers and Musicians

Editor-in-Chief

DANIEL GREGORY MASON

Columbia University

Associate Editors

EDWARD B. HILL
Harvard University

LELAND HALL
Past Professor, Univ. of Wisconsin

Managing Editor

CÉSAR SAERCHINGER
Modern Music Society of New York

In Fourteen Volumes

Profusely Illustrated

NEW YORK

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF MUSIC

1915

R35144

ꝑꝯ ſont ceulx celles . qui ont
fait le ꝓſaultier.

THE ART OF MUSIC: VOLUME ONE

A Narrative History of Music

Department Editors:

LELAND HALL

AND

CÉSAR SAERCHINGER

Introduction by

C. HUBERT H. PARRY, Mus. Doc.

Director Royal College of Music, London.
Formerly Professor of Music, University of Oxford, etc.

BOOK I

THE PRE-CLASSIC PERIODS

NEW YORK
THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF MUSIC

Copyright, 1915, by
THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF MUSIC, Inc.
[All Rights Reserved]

THE ART OF MUSIC

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

So many and varied are the paths of musical enjoyment and profit opened out in the following pages, so different and sometimes so conflicting are the types of art represented there, that the timid or inexperienced reader may well pause at the threshold, afraid of wholly losing his way in such a labyrinth. He may hesitate to trust himself in so unfamiliar a landscape without first seeing some sort of small-scale plan of the ground, which, omitting the confusing details, shows in bold relief only the larger and essential divisions—the 'lay of the land.' Such a plan it is the object of this introduction to furnish.

Of the two most general types of reader, the professional musician and the amateur or lover of music, the first is least in need of such assistance. His keen interest in his specialty will naturally determine the order of his reading; he will look first for all he can find about that, and later work out from that centre in various directions, and meanwhile the plan peculiar to this work of assembling all information on a given subject contained in any of the volumes under a name or subject word in the index volume will make this process as systematic and economical of time as it is fascinating to intellectual curiosity. Thus the index volume will serve as a sort of central rotunda, so to speak, making each room in this house of information accessible from

every other, and it will matter little at what point we enter. The singer may go in by Volume V, the pianist by Volume VII, the organist by Volume VI: all will eventually penetrate the entire edifice.

It is, then, the music lover unfamiliar with all musical technique, and quite unspecialized in his interest, who most needs the help that these preliminary suggestions may offer. The kind of help he will want will depend, of course, on what it is he chiefly wishes to gain by his reading. Now we shall probably not go far wrong in saying that such a reader will desire, first, that general knowledge of the most important schools and the greatest individuals of music history which is not only a powerful aid to the enjoyment of music, but is nowadays coming to be considered an essential part of a liberal education. Secondly, he will wish to gain sufficient familiarity with music itself, and sufficient understanding of the instruments by which it is produced and the ways in which they influence its structure and style, to afford him the basis for sound discrimination between good, bad, and indifferent music, to develop, in short, his taste. In the third place, he will justly consider that, however abstruse and involved the theory of music may be, its fundamental principles are nevertheless accessible to the layman, and that familiarity with such principles, especially those of musical structure, affording as it will an insight into the way music is put together, is an invaluable aid to that sympathetic understanding of it which comes only to the alert and attentive listener. In a word, the music lover will demand of his reading that it instruct him historically, that it refine his taste by developing his sense of style, and that it intensify his enjoyment by showing him how to listen.

Glancing now at the table of contents, we shall see that 'The Art of Music' naturally divides itself into three portions, each especially suited to subserve one of

these three needs of the reader. The first four volumes, historical in character, are primarily instructive. Volumes V to IX, inclusive, deal with the practical side of the art—what is sometimes called 'applied music'—and in describing the chief media by which it is produced, such as the voice, the organ, the piano, the string quartet, the orchestra, provide general notions of what is appropriate to each. The short essays on harmony and on form in Volume XII, and many passages of explanation of similar matters scattered through all the volumes, will acquaint the student with the fundamental principles of musical theory and the standard types of musical structure, thus affording him valuable aid to appreciative listening. The three portions of the work, historical, practical, and theoretical, are finally correlated and unified by Volumes XI and XII, the Dictionary and Index, and illustrated by the musical examples in Volumes XIII and XIV.

Let us examine a little more closely the ground covered by each of these three general sections, one after another, not yet in detail—that will come only with the actual reading—but with the idea rather of getting a bird's-eye view of the whole field in its salient masses and divisions.

The history of music is like that of other arts in being divided into schools or epochs. These are of course to a certain extent arbitrary and artificial—marked off by critics for convenience of classification—and a composer may belong to two or more schools, as Beethoven, for example, is both 'classical' and 'romantic,' without being any more aware of it than we are when our train crosses the line, say, from New York State into Massachusetts. But they are also in part natural and real, because any fruitful idea in art—such as the 'impressionistic' idea of light in painting, for instance—is so much greater than any one man's capacity to grasp it that a whole generation or more of artists is needed to

develop its possibilities. Such a group of artists forms what we call a 'school' or 'period,' beginning usually with pioneers whose work is crude but novel, continuing with countless workers, most of whom are after a short time completely forgotten, and culminating with one or two greatly endowed masters who gather up all the best achievements of the school in their own work and stands for posterity as its figure-heads, or in some cases engulf it entirely in their colossal shadows. Pioneers, journeymen, geniuses—that is the list of characters in the drama we call an artistic school.

If we try to outline in the roughest way the half dozen or so most important schools we can find in the entire history of music we shall get something like the following. After the long groping among the rudiments that went on through Greek and early Christian times there emerged during the middle ages a type of ecclesiastical music which, after a development of several centuries, culminated in the work of Orlando de Lasso (1520-1594), Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1524-1594), and others. This music is as primitive, archaic, and severe to our ears as the early Flemish religious pictures are to our eyes. It can be described chiefly in negatives. It did not employ instruments, but only voices in the chorus. It had no regular time-measure, but wandered on with as little definiteness of rhythm as the Latin prose to which it was set. It employed no grating harsh combinations of tones ('dissonances') such as make our music so stirring to the emotions, partly because they are difficult for voices, partly because the science of harmony was in its infancy, partly because the kind of expression it aimed at was that of religious peace. Each group of voices had its own melody to carry, and as there were sometimes as many as sixteen groups an extraordinarily complex web of voices or 'parts' was developed, to which is due the name of polyphonic (many-voiced) applied to this

school. Unsuited as it is to the restless temper of the modern man, it often attained within its own limits an exquisite beauty.

With the application of this general type of art, the polyphonic, to instruments, especially the organ, new developments supervened. Dissonances were perfectly easy, and most effective, on the organ, that would have been impossible for voices. Definite metre and rhythm were gradually introduced. Above all, the many melodies of the older style to some extent gave way to the massive detached chords more suitable to the organ (because the player could grasp them by handfuls instead of having to make his fingers play hide and seek among the keys), and thus was born another great type of style, the 'homophonic' (one main melody, accompanied by chords rather than by other melodies). At the same time the intellectual interest was vastly increased by the use of more and more definite and recognizable bits of melody, happily called the 'subjects' or 'themes' of the composition, which could be developed and marshalled just as a writer develops and marshals his thoughts. The fugue is the arch type of this kind of composition, with its style partly polyphonic and partly homophonic, its deep thoughtfulness, its ingenuity, and its surprising variety and depth of emotional expression. Its supreme master was Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

Despite the mixture of styles in the fugue, however, the preponderant element was still the basket-like texture of winding melodies suitable especially to voices—hence it was only in the suite, a type which developed at the same time and of which also Bach was one of the supreme masters, that the homophonic style suitable to instruments was freely worked out. Instruments mark the rhythm much more strongly than voices, so that all sorts of dance movements are particularly appropriate for them. When the rhythm is

so marked, comparatively short phrases of tune stand out sharply and balance each other like the verses in a couplet of poetry. Composers soon found out how further to group these phrases in definite parts or sections, so contrasted that the whole of the short piece or 'movement' presented a perfectly clear, sharp impression, had a definite beginning, middle, and end—a clear scheme of form. This clearness of impression was enhanced by making only one line of melody—the 'tune' or 'air,' as we say—prominent, either subordinating all the others or doing away with them entirely in favor of an accompaniment of detached chords such as we find in a modern waltz or march. The suite, then, as it is found in its golden age, the eighteenth century, is a series of short dance tunes of strongly marked rhythm, precise in phraseology and concise in form, in the homophonic style. Among its masters may be mentioned, besides the German Bach, Couperin and Rameau in France, Corelli (violin) and Scarlatti (harpsichord) in Italy, and Handel in England.

Closely allied with the suite, indeed an offshoot from it, is the sonata, originally any piece for instruments (from *sonare,* to sound or play) as distinguished from a cantata for voices (from *cantare,* to sing). The old sonatas are essentially suites. But the generation after Bach's, of which one of his own sons, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, was a guiding spirit, hit upon one of those apparently simple but immensely fruitful ideas out of which whole schools are made. It was this: Instead of coming to a stop as soon as you have outlined a single musical idea or 'theme,' and then merely repeating or slightly elaborating it, as was done in all the movements of the typical suite, why not embrace in the span of your thought *two contrasting ideas,** so charac-

* To be exact Emanuel Bach was not responsible for the idea of contrast, which was a principle developed by the so-called Mannheim school, whose leader was Johann Stamitz. But with Bach the two separate sections of the 'Exposition' first become distinct.

terized and arranged that each should serve as the effective foil of the other? Once this notion of making a piece of music out of two contrasting themes was tried out in practice it proved to have endless potentialities. In the two hundred years that have elapsed since C. P.E. Bach's birth in 1714 its possibilities have not been exhausted; it has shown an elasticity which has enabled it to serve equally for the embodiment of such different ideas as those of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Tschaïkowsky, Brahms; it has been applied to all branches of instrumental music, extending its sway quickly from the 'sonata,' specifically so called, for one, two or three instruments, to the quartet, quintet, etc., for a group, to the concerto for a soloist with orchestral accompaniment, and to the overture and the symphony for full orchestra.

The purest examples of the application of this scheme to orchestral music are to be found in the first movements of the symphonies of Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), of W. A. Mozart (1756-1791), and above all of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1821), the genius in whom the classical symphony culminated. The method adopted in such movements, of which the opening allegro of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony may stand as an unsurpassable model, was, first, to present two strongly individual and contrasting musical ideas ('themes'), the first usually more vigorous in character, the second more tender and appealing; second, to let these thoughts germinate or develop in such a way as to bring clearly forth what was at first latent in them; and, finally, to draw together the threads and complete the musical action by a restatement of the root ideas in something like their original form. The variety, the power, the subtlety, the unfailing instinct for beauty, with which Beethoven worked out the almost limitless possibilities of such a scheme can hardly be realized even dimly save by a loving study of his masterpieces,

phrase by phrase, almost note by note. His symphonies are like Greek statues of the great period in their infinite variety, their perfect unity. It may seriously be doubted whether music can ever a second time attain the harmony of all its elements that it found in this supreme master—that which one of his critics has happily termed 'the perfect balance of expression and design.'

Certain it is that immediately after him, in large measure as a result of his own example, it took a pronounced turn toward picturesqueness, toward highly personal expression, toward all that is conveniently summed up in the vague word Romanticism. Just what romanticism means it is easier to suggest by examples than to define in general terms. Franz Schubert (1797-1828), emphasizing the lyric element in orchestral music, so that his symphonies have almost the personal expressiveness of songs, is romantic. Robert Schumann (1810-1856), with his vivid short piano pieces bearing such suggestive titles as 'Soaring,' 'Whims,' 'In the Night,' 'Why,' and with his musical portraits of friends, his quotations from his own works, and other ingenious devices for stimulating our imaginations, literary and pictorial as well as musical, is romantic. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) is romantic with his orchestral canvases of the Hebrides islands bathed in sunshine and clamored over by sea-birds, and of the delicate dances of Shakespeare's fairies in the 'Mid-summer Night's Dream'; and romantic is Frédéric Chopin (1809-1849), with his nocturnes and preludes. The composers of the romantic period, in fact, embodied in the types of design they inherited from Beethoven (but practised, as a rule, with far less mastery than he) a sort of poetic suggestion of all kinds of things outside of music. Their art is essentially an art of suggestion; and, while its purely musical beauty is often great, they wish us not to rest content with the music

for itself, but to regard it as a symbol of something beyond.

Once composers had begun to label, so to speak, the musical expressiveness which the classicists preferred to leave free to act upon each hearer according to his temperament and associations, certain especially literary minds among them, notably Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) and Franz Liszt (1811-1886), naturally felt impelled to carry the process a step further, to amplify and edit the label into complete 'directions for using.' Such 'directions for using' are called 'programs,' and the school which affects them is named 'programmistic,' or, by analogy with a similar school in literature, 'realistic.' Your typical programmist, such as Berlioz, is not satisfied with the romanticist's mere suggestion of a subject; he demands in advance a complete bill of fare of his musical feast. When Beethoven, a classicist, deals with a human emotion—love, for instance, as in the Fifth Symphony—he aims merely to stimulate in us the most general feeling and let each of us interpret for himself; when a romanticist like Tschaikowsky writes almost equally beautiful love music he gives a fillip to our imagination by naming it an overture to 'Romeo and Juliet'; but when Berlioz conceives his *Symphonie Fantastique* he must have his lover killed on the guillotine—he must even hear the knife fall. Such a theory of musical æsthetics is evidently highly dangerous, since it tends to bind shackles on the free movement of the music, and also to distract the hearer's attention from the music to something far less vital. Nevertheless in the hands of Richard Strauss in our own day (born 1864), who seems to be the genius in which this school is to culminate, it has led to remarkable results.

We have now reviewed in highly summary fashion some of the chief schools, with their most representative masters, that may be noted in a bird's-eye view of the history of instrumental music. As for the other

great branch of the art, music associated with literature, and especially its most important manifestation, the opera, classification according to artistic principles is both more difficult and less necessary, since the opera can very well be studied by countries rather than by schools. The reader will at any rate find in his study of opera that one or two clear conceptions of the national or racial character of the three peoples who have done the most important work in the operatic field, the Italians, the French, and the Germans, will help him more than æsthetic standards difficult to apply to an æsthetic hybrid which is neither drama nor music. Thus the Italian sensuousness has been both the blessing and the curse of opera in Italy: the blessing by keeping it simple and tuneful, as in so much of Rossini (1792-1868), Bellini (1802-1835), Donizetti (1798-1848), the early Verdi (1813-1901), and even such moderns as Mascagni and Leoncavallo; the curse of opening the door to all sorts of absurdities on the dramatic side, and to the abuse of the power of the singers in meaningless virtuosity. Again, the keen dramatic sense of the French has helped to minimize such absurdities in works produced by their composers or at their national opera house under their national influence, as for instance those of Gluck (1714-1787), Cherubini (1760-1842), Meyerbeer (1791-1864), and others. Finally the warmth of sentiment of the Germans, their unrivalled faculty for getting at the emotional essence of a situation and expressing it in music, must be accorded a large part in the power of the romantic operas of the German Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) and the music dramas of Richard Wagner (1813-1883). In revenge the Teutonic deficiency of dramatic sense and tolerance of tedium are to some extent accountable for those long stagnations of the action in the Wagnerian dramas which the most ardent admirers of Wagner the musician no longer deny.

In all this historical study of the earlier volumes of 'The Art of Music' the reader will be primarily in quest of information, his interest will be that of the scientist in facts. Even here, however, he will soon find himself discriminating the good from the bad, or from the less good, setting up standards of comparison, in a word, mingling with his purely scientific interest in facts an artistic interest in values. In all periods he will find the great man distinguished from the little by nobility, depth, and variety of thought, and by purity of style. In all ages he will discover hosts of mediocrities for one genius. He will realize that there were as many routinists in the polyphonic school, as many dry-as-dusts in the classic, as many sentimentalists in the romantic, as there are uninspired scene-painters among the programmists. He will remark what may be called the double paradox of art: first, that cheap decorativeness, empty display of merely technical skill, 'splurge' of all sorts, while often making music popular in its own day, has always killed it early for posterity, as for example in the case of the over-ornamented arias of Italian opera or the equally over-ornamented piano pieces of Thalberg and other early nineteenth century pianists; second, that simplicity, directness, sincerity are always at first ignored or misunderstood, and only gradually take the supreme place which belongs to them, as we see in studying such otherwise dissimilar artists as Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, Franck. Such observations open up the path to a true, independent, and unconventional estimate of artistic values, to the development of real taste.

It is especially in amplifying, clarifying, and solidifying this taste that the second group of volumes, dealing with the media of musical production, will be useful to the unprofessional reader. A knowledge of the construction of instruments and of the style appropriate to each, as determined by its peculiarities and exempli-

fied in its literature, is a great aid both to the appreciation of excellence and to the detection of shoddiness. A simple example will make this clear. Every one who has watched a pianist play a waltz knows how appropriate and convenient for the piano is that kind of accompaniment which has been called the 'dum-dum-dum'—where the left hand first sounds the bass and then strikes twice a chord completing the harmony and at the same time marking the rhythm. This is an excellent piano device, because it does these three needful things in the simplest possible way. What shall we say, however, when laziness or incompetence, writing a waltz for orchestra, borrows this piano device without change, as it does constantly in the popular music of the day? Evidently enough, what was well fitted to the piano is ridiculous for an orchestra: for here it gives the bass instruments a series of detached notes without coherence or interest, and condemns the unfortunate players who provide the middle parts to repeat an endless 'dum-dum, dum-dum' which outrages all musical instinct.

Or, again, we sometimes hear piano pieces in which the harmonies are arranged in solid chords, as in the hymn-tune familiar in the protestant church. Why the effect should be so singularly vapid we do not know until we think of the peculiarities of the instruments involved. Voices, especially in large groups, as in congregational singing, move slowly, sustain well, and show their quality best when disposed in broad masses. Hence the appropriateness to them of these deliberate chords. But the piano, on the contrary, sustains very poorly, achieves fullness of volume only by means of rapid utterance, and is in short at its very worst in the hymn-tune style. Piano tone requires to be split up into many facets, to be carved, so to speak; but vocal tone is like those substances, such as colored marble, which show their texture best in the block. Recently

there has been much controversy as to the appropriateness of organ transcriptions of orchestral works. No doubt the organ can render the notes of a symphony quite as well as the poor overworked piano, but a rudimentary knowledge of the mechanism of the organ will show us where lies its special capacity—in the sustaining and rolling up of great masses of tone, and not at all in that more intimate expressiveness through swelling and fading and through accent in which the violin is peerless. The organ is magnificent in a Bach fugue, unsatisfactory in a Beethoven symphony, ridiculous in a popular dance. Thus on all sides we see that style depends on the medium, and that a sensitive taste will no more detach a musical figure from its appropriate setting than it will transfer the costume of the logging-camp to the drawing-room, or *vice versa.*

What makes all study of this kind particularly necessary to the would-be intelligent music-lover of to-day is that our generation seems to be going through a period of unusual confusion in all matters of taste. Whether it be that our resources have accumulated faster than our powers of assimilation could develop, or that popular education, while increasing the amount of musical enjoyment, has lowered its quality, or that the ever-present commercialism has betrayed us—whatever be the causes, it is certain that almost all our standards have suffered from a false liberalism, that we have lost old lines and boundaries without getting anything to put in their place, and that much as we may boast of no longer starving our artistic instincts as did our puritan forefathers, we do not yet discriminatingly nourish them, but rather overeat ourselves sick. There is hardly any branch of music where this tendency to excess may not be discovered. The modern conception of the piano, for instance, as a rival of the orchestra in richness, variety, and power of sound has adulterated piano style in many respects. It has led directly to 'un-

grateful' writing for the piano by composers, to pounding and other exaggerations by players. There are few musicians nowadays who show the fine self-control that made Schumann and Chopin models of how the piano should be treated. The rare intuition of Debussy in this respect is one of the true justifications of a vogue not perhaps altogether free from faddism.

In chamber music, notably the string quartet, where delicateness of sonority is even more vital to the style, since it is the condition of the clearness of the individual voices, and cannot be departed from without an immediate coarsening of the texture, there is the same tendency to imitate the orchestra. One hears many modern quartets in which all four instruments keep restlessly sawing away, often on two strings at once, as if they were taking part in a hurdle race or a debating society, rather than in a work of art. Special effects like harmonics and the use of the mute, appropriate enough in solos and at long intervals, are grossly abused. In striving to be something beyond its frame this most exquisite combination of four musical personalities loses all its intimateness, all its charm. Even orchestral music itself does not escape these perversions. There is a distinct cult at the present day, especially in France, for playing at concerts music originally written to accompany pantomimes or ballets, and even for composing pieces intended for concert according to the processes suitable for such illustrative music—with highly spiced sonorous effects, schemes of structure based on dramatic action, and little or no purely musical interest. Indeed, all thoughtful observers must sometimes ask themselves if this universal tendency to force things out of their natural fields, to make them do not what they can do best, but what they are least expected to do, is not a symptom of a grave disorder of our æsthetic sense, a preference of novelty to beauty, a debased fondness for the queer, an invasion of art by

that low curiosity which draws a street crowd around any one who will stand on his head, or wear his clothes wrong side before. The reader genuinely fond of music will be glad to combat this tendency to the best of his power, and to that end will inform himself of those peculiarities of instruments by which appropriateness of style is so largely determined.

What the average reader can get from his study of the theoretical portions of 'The Art of Music' will depend largely on his instinctive sense of the larger bearing of technical facts. Studied with pedantic insistence of detail harmony is a dry subject; studied with an imagination eager for the light it throws on general æsthetic questions it proves unexpectedly illuminating. Harmony describes the material available to the musician; it is, we might say, the dictionary from which each composer chooses the words he needs to express his thought; and to study it is therefore for the lover of music much what it is for the lover of literature to study the vocabularies of his favorite authors—the derivations of the words, their ancient associations, the flavors which cling about them. Just as Sir Thomas Browne has his special words, noble-sounding, many-syllabled, and his special forms of sentence that roll grandly off the tongue, and as Keats finds in the same English a completely different instrument, capable of romantic utterance and full of elusive suggestion: so the harmony of Bach is not the harmony of Schumann, although it is made out of the same notes and even many of the same chords. Indeed, the very same chord is not the same in effect, in style, when used in the context of two composers, or even of one composer in two different moods; a chord is a chameleon that takes the color of its surroundings. How full of sadness, of infinite resignation, is the first B flat chord in the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony! How the very same B flat chord pulsates with energy in the Allegro of the

Fourth! The study of the action and reaction of harmony and style is a fascinating one, in spite of its difficulty—one on which books might be written, as many have been on the choice of words in literature.

Easier, however, and much more directly helpful to appreciation, is the study of the chief principles of musical form or structure, as they affect, not the composer, but the listener. As one going into a foreign country provides himself with some guidance as to the main things he is going to see there, so the music lover to whom symphonic music remains to some degree a foreign region likes to find out before he hears it what he is to listen for. That knowledge in detail will be found in the essay on musical form in Volume XII. Here it is our business, as before, avoiding detail, to get such a bird's-eye view as may be possible of the most general facts of musical form. Especially agreeable and useful would it be if we could show that, in music as elsewhere, form and formalism are two essentially different things, and that while formalism is the conventionalizing and stiffening that indicate lowered vitality or incipient death in a work of art, form is the necessary shape it takes because it is alive. The formless is not yet alive; the formal is dying or dead; only the *formed* truly lives. Therefore musical form is quite simple and natural, like the branching of trees or the crystallizing of salts, and the study of it is based on observation and common sense, and strives to determine how sounds have to be ordered to become intelligible.

Essentially there are but three processes concerned in musical construction—the announcement or exposition of the themes, their elaboration or development, and their recapitulation. These processes are the natural outcome of quite simple psychological facts, and are duplicated in literature and other arts. The announcement of a theme is the preliminary statement,

made as simple and as brief as possible, of the thought with which the composer proposes to occupy himself. For the listener, it is the presentation of a bit of melody of a particular rhythmic profile which he remembers by this profile, this characteristic combination of long and short, accented and unaccented notes, just as he remembers a person by the shape of his face. Careful attention to the main themes of a composition is of vital importance to appreciation, since the themes are the actors of the musical drama, and all the action is really only the working out of their latent characteristics.

This is what we mean by development. In no music worthy of the name is development an artificial, intellectual process; it is simply the germination of the theme-seeds. As it results, however, in constantly increasing complexity, it would quickly confuse the listener were it not judiciously combined with simple repetitions of the original ideas, serving both to mark the completion of one cycle of development and sometimes to initiate a new one. The recapitulations insure the unity of the impression as a whole made by the work of art; the developments give it the richness and variety inseparable from all life.

The many special musical forms of which the student will read are merely so many clearly defined combinations of these three processes. Thus in the minuet, for example, a comparatively primitive form, there is one theme, expounded, developed, and recapitulated, and in the second part called trio, a second theme treated exactly the same way. In the 'Song form' so called, used for slow movements of sonatas and symphonies, there is usually an exposition of a theme, a slight development, and an ornamented or otherwise varied repetition; then, without any complete stop, a contrasting theme, treated much the same way; finally, a return of the main theme, either treated as at first or some-

what more briefly. Sometimes there is a short coda (concluding section) with further slight development of one or both themes.

The sonata form, as we have already seen, is distinguished from both these more rudimentary types by having two themes of almost equal importance—sometimes three. These contrast with each other in expression, rhythm, and what is called 'key.' Their development is extended and occupies the entire middle part of the piece. They are regularly recapitulated much as at first, but now both in the same 'key,' and may be followed by a coda, which with Beethoven assumes sometimes almost the importance of a second development. In the rondo there is a constant alternation between a main theme and other secondary themes or sections of development.

Thus in all the special forms we find but different applications of the three fundamental processes of exposition, development, and recapitulation, much as all plants go through the necessary cycle of seeding, growth, and blossoming. The more the music of the great symphonic masters is studied the more marvellous will the reader find the mingling of ingenuity and simplicity with which they know how to marshal their thoughts. Such study makes listening no longer a passive or even wearisome process, but the most fascinating reliving of a spiritual life as many-sided, as infinitely various, as filled with beauty, as that of Nature herself.

DANIEL GREGORY MASON.

JUNE, 1914.

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF MUSIC

BOOK I

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF MUSIC

INTRODUCTION

MUSICAL art is the idealized art of the inner man as distinguished from the arts of painting and sculpture and their like which are the idealized expression of what is outside him. It is the result of the urgent impulses of certain peculiarly constituted human beings to express things which move them in ways which are favorable to permanence; which permanence proves attainable only through the controlling influence of the instinct for order.

The instinct for order and the impulse to gratify it in all directions seem to be present in all unperverted human beings; which is obviously the consequence of the fact that it has always ministered to the preservation of those who possessed it. The primitive savage who kept his weapons in some kind of orderly fashion, and knew where to lay his hands on them when wanted, easily survived the disorderly savage who could not find them soon enough to prevent being exterminated. The primitive savage who could dispose his means of existence in an orderly fashion was more likely to survive the savage who had no proper place for anything; and there were thousands of other ways in which this instinct favored its possessor; and favored him more and more as social and anti-social conditions progressed in complexity. Looked at from another point of view, that of experience, the lack of the sense of order betokens low mental power; and

the possession of it in higher and higher degrees is a token of higher and higher capacities of mind.

The sense of order is the basis of organization; and out of organization comes permanence. The more perfect the organization the more lasting is the thing organized. What is well built is well organized for its purpose, and stands fast. What is ill built is badly organized for its purpose, and tumbles down. And so it is with a work of literature. It cannot be said that a noble thought ill-presented will soon be forgotten; but its being ill-presented makes it obscure. And it must be admitted that fascination is added to the utterance of a great thought by the perfect clearness and nicety with which it is expressed. The presentation is in that sense admirably organized and the mind welcomes it, and returns to it frequently with delight; whereas if it is clumsily expressed it gives the mind unnecessary trouble to understand what it means, and then there is a feeling of distaste and annoyance which prejudices the welcome that the great thought merits.

So it is with a work of art. Clumsiness and incoherence of structure beget discomfort, however great the intentions. Imperfections which may not be noticed at first grow more and more oppressive, till they become unbearable, and at last mankind is impelled to regard the good intentions as little better than opportunities wasted.

It may be justly argued that such imperfections are inevitable not only because art represents human efforts but because organization takes centuries to effect. It is also true that certain types of imperfection are pathetically attractive and afford a kind of interest in themselves where they suggest the kind of human condition and effort which is characteristic of the time and circumstances in which any individual work of art was produced. But in such case it is necessary that the motive shall be honorable. After ages will

never be able to regard the deficiencies in modern church and chapel architecture, stained glass windows, modern tombstones and suburban villa residences with anything but disgust. Putting such aberrations aside for the present, it is pleasant to realize that one of the privileges of an instinct for style is to be able to recognize the stage of organization which has been reached, both in diction and structure, by the qualities of any work of art, and to locate the type of organization and balance its proportionate relation to what is expressed, and, more subtly still, to discern even the intention. Men who have any artistic instinct estimate the quality of a work of art by such an adjustment. They feel its nobility if it has any, even though the standard of organization is low, by estimating the quality of the thought in connection with the inevitable limitations of the means of expression. A work of art may inspire constant delight even though its form be obvious and its details crude, if the methods employed are sincere efforts to express with the best means available an inspiring idea. Limitations do not necessarily imply false construction. There is this to be remembered: that the progress of thought and the progress of organization proceed together and that a thought which clearly belongs to several generations ago will not be as complex or have to cover so much ground as the thought of later times of equal status; and that the limitation of the means of organization of the time to which the thought belongs will therefore be adequate and congenial to that thought, whereas, if a composer or artist use only the resources of diction and design of two hundred years ago to express a modern thought, the deficiency of the organization becomes at once apparent.

It is worth while to observe parenthetically that in primitive stages of art men did not attempt organization in order to give permanence to their artistic prod-

ucts. Their attitude was that of the unconscious child, and they merely sought to gratify their instinct for order, and arrived at the principle of organization in the process. So the beginnings of art were the direct result of the inevitable processes of the universe. Men found out the relation of organization to permanence long afterward, when they developed the capacity to analyze and consider what they were doing.

Mankind, like the individual, passes through three stages in his manner of producing and doing things. The first is unconscious and spontaneous, the second is self-critical, analytical, and self-conscious; and the third is the synthesis which comes of the recovery of spontaneity with all the advantages of the absorption of right principles of action. In the products of the first stage people delight in spite of crudity and clumsiness because they are fervent, genuine, essentially human. The products of the second are often ineffectual, occasionally suggestive, and for the most part more historically than humanly interesting. It is in the last phase that the greatest works of musical art are produced; and it is in such works of art that the approximation to perfection may be found, in which there is no part which has not some relation to every other part; nothing which does not minister to the fullness with which the inner idea of the artist is expressed; in which every curve of melody, every progression of harmony, every modulation, every rhythmic group, every climax and relaxation of stress, every shade of color, and every part of the inner texture at once ministers to coherent and cogent expression and at the same time fulfills its function in the general scheme of design or organization. From mere elementary orderliness art has progressed in such things to the very highest manifestations of the subtlest and most perfect organization which the human mind is capable of achieving. But it must be admitted that such an

ideal is only reached in very rare cases, by masters whose complete absorption in the work of artistic creation is undisturbed by distracting influences; who can maintain their concentration through a prolonged and coherent effort; and who have the gift to apply their faculties and successfully call upon their minds to provide exactly the right methods and procedures whenever required, and at the same time to hold everything balanced by the requirements of proportionate relation which is indispensable to true artistic organization.

It is to such perfection that all true artists aspire, and it is only those who are absolutely true to themselves who can even approximate to it. In days when commercialism is rampant and the favor of such as are totally ignorant of the most elementary artistic principles is held to be the criterion of artistic worth, it practically becomes impossible.

There are two phases of organization. The first is the organization of terms, signs, methods, materials, some of which must be found before art begins, but most of which are found as it evolves. The second phase is the organization of the individual works of art. The parallel that springs to mind at the moment is the organization of units and supplies of an army, on the one hand, and, on the other, the organization of the campaign and the engagements for which the forces and their needs were organized. Upon the former kind of organization it is not necessary to dwell. It is an obvious necessity of art. But, though part of it, it does not illustrate or affect the quality of the art products except in a purely elementary and mechanical sense. Of the latter kind, which manifests itself inevitably in varying degrees in every musical work from the cheapest popular song to the highest instrumental symphony, it must be admitted that it is worth while to have some little understanding; especially of the

relations to one another of the various branches and factors in the artistic scheme which the study of such things in detail is apt to miss.

At the outset the curious anomaly may be admitted that expression and organization appear to be antagonistic. This is only one way of recognizing that art, like everything else, is achieved by the accommodation of opposites. The very idea of human feeling being expressed in preconceived set terms sounds so preposterous as to be almost repugnant. Yet if it is not expressed in set terms how should it maintain its hold upon the mind? We know by experience that human feeling upsets organization (as, for instance, in the confusion of rhythm into which highly emotional performers and singers are driven), and that organization stifles human feeling (as, for instance, in the empty, inadequate words that are stuffed into poetry to make rhymes, and the ridiculous shams that are stuffed in architecture as in music to make a pattern complete). But, as a matter of fact, though language also might be described as antagonistic to feeling, yet feeling cannot definitely be conveyed to other beings without being formalized into words, and the words arranged according to the recognized rules of prosody. And, as a matter of experience, when language has become, as it does, a spontaneous means of expressing feeling, it very often intensifies the feelings that it is used to express. Many men are more excited by their own violent language than by the motives which caused them to give vent to it. So in art some men only begin to find out how strong their feelings are when they try to put them into shape. The mere fact of organizing effective climaxes according to settled principles causes them to believe in deep-set passion which they would not otherwise have suspected in themselves. Oratory is never in itself a proof of greatness or even sincerity of soul.

So it cannot be maintained that the appearance of antagonism is fully borne out by experience. But what is evident is that the human element represents instability and the constructive element stability; and the adjustment of the two keeps art alive. All art that has life in it must be in unstable equilibrium, for, indeed, all thought whatever induces instability. Stable equilibrium, if such a thing could be conceivable, is merely abeyance of activity. As a matter of fact there is no part of the universe which is in stable equilibrium, art as little as the rest of it. Art is, in the widest sense, man's highest expression of the Spirit of the Universe; that is of the effects which are produced in his inner man by his personal experiences in it and his cogitations about it, and art's life is governed by the same laws. In the universe all things seem to tend toward stable equilibrium, and yet of necessity when it seems to be approached some new direction of force disturbs it and sets up new systems of motions which may last for ages. So in art there has been a tendency to deal with the claims of feeling and the claims of form at different times. At certain periods in art's history the human element predominated and the claims of organization were either ignored or overlooked. The result was incoherence, and the need of more circumspect procedure gave organization an excessive spell of attention. Convention then took the place of realities and art became the playground of ingenious dry-as-dusts, till the human element again asserted its claims and progress swayed in the direction of instability again; and so the great rhythm was maintained.

But it would be absurd to pretend that the alternation proceeded regularly without yielding to external influences. The direction which art took was often influenced by social conditions external to itself. A chance whiff of fashion or a wave of impulse in favor of intellectual subtleties would naturally cause a phase

of art in which human feeling would be crowded out by superfluity of organizing ingenuity. A state of society in which a few people enjoyed the results of their ancestors having annexed all the material advantages of the world and regarded the rest of humanity as merely provided by Providence to minister to their vanities, would be peculiarly favorable to the exuberance of conventional pattern-making and elegant futilities; while the successful overthrow of such a poisonous tradition and the general acceptance of the widest claims of humanity to common justice naturally brought an overwhelming impulse of human feeling into play. But the apparent derangement of the ebb and flow was not actually destructive of the principle, but only affected the length of the periods and the extent of the one influence on the other.

As a rule the instinctive discernment of humanity was so far just that it is far more easy to point to periods when human feeling predominated than to those when the organizing instinct predominated. This was natural because all artistic beings are, as far as the impulse is concerned, at the outset bent upon expressing feelings of some sort. Even those who have more aptitude for technical efficiency than mind are not actually aiming at producing supernaturally correct grammatical exercises. They are always much offended if such a thing is suggested. The unsophisticated lovers of music who have no technical knowledge to speak of are always concerned with the human side of it, they are moved by the sound, the color, the rhythm, the character of the melody, and, as far as they can get at it, by the idea the composer wants to express. It lies with the unsophisticated to maintain the claims of that side of art, as Wagner suggested when he said that he made his works for the not-musicians.

The fully instructed are inevitably inclined to over-

estimate mere workmanship. The wonder that is inspired by supremely masterly organization impels experts to be carried away by their admiration of it; and, moreover, it is practicable to discuss that aspect of art fully and clearly, whereas language is not apt to discuss the meaning and spirit of musical art, for the obvious reason that it is the business of music to express things that are beyond the reach of words. And it is pathetic to think how many thousands of people who have musical insight, and are really moved and inspired by it, are, through their very conscientious desire to understand it, misled into supposing that organization and dexterous use of the methods of art are the things that are of highest importance. This has been the bane of the greater part of theoretic writing about art and is the thing which arouses rebellion in ardent and aspiring minds against the stress that is laid on principles of form and grammatical orthodoxies. To such dispositions it seems preposterous to devote so much attention to the organization and to take so little count of the thing organized; and their antagonism is indeed very serviceable. For, however ridiculous the results their ardor often produces, they do help to keep art alive and to prevent its being stifled by conventions. And they do maintain the necessary protest against the paralyzing theory that has at times been propounded, that art is merely a special manifestation of clever mechanical ingenuity. Coherent organization is indeed a necessary condition of art, but the thing organized is of the foremost importance. The idea comes first and the organization is secondary. Yet the one is futile without the other; the idea cannot be conveyed without the organization, but organization without something to organize is mere superfluity. The idea without organization is mere incoherence; mere organization without meaning is empty puzzle making. Neither by itself has any claim to be distinguished as art.

The ways in which a work of art can be organized are practically innumerable; but in musical art they all have the simple structural basis of a departure from a given point to a point or many points of contrast and back home again. The infinite number of varieties depends on the manner in which the central point is established, and how the departure from it is made; how the contrasting middle portion is organized, and how the return home is established. The evolution of principles of form consists in the elaboration of the main divisions into subordinate contrasts, contrasts to contrasts, inner organic procedures, devices of structure which are linked and superimposed on one another, in which the steps that lead away from the main centre are successively distributed in subtle gradations, all of which are available to make the adaptation to the idea more perfect. The story of the evolution is perspicuously clear, as the vast amount of devoted and, latterly, intelligent labor which has been expended upon collecting folk-songs and specimens of quasi-musical phrases of savages has completed the story from the first appearance of the desire for some kind of orderliness up to the portentous elaborations of European music of the present day.

The way complication has been built upon complication may be easily grasped by observing the successive stages of art for which organization had to be provided. At first it had only to serve for a single melodic line; then, in the period of ecclesiastical choral music, for two or more combined melodic lines; then composers combined more and more melodic lines as they found out how it could be done, and this caused their minds to be almost monopolized by what may be called linear organization, which is a systematized relation of melodic parts which are quasi independent, but knit into unity by their subjection to the rules of melodic scales, which were called modes. The highest

outcome of long and concentrated thought in this direction was the type of organization known as the fugue, which is a linear principle of organization vitalized by the systematic distribution of recognizable melodic phrases. Fugue was the first form in which the musical idea was the most prominent factor in organization, and in the hands of genuine composers was developed to a high degree of perfection. But it left almost unrealized the problem of organization which dawned upon men's minds as necessary when they began to feel the harmonies which were the result of combined melodious parts as entities in themselves. This problem was dealt with in the period when men devoted themselves to the classification of harmonies in key systems, which gave every harmony a definite function in artistic organization; and the capacity of the human mind was developed till it could recognize one succession of harmonies as representing one key centre and another succession of harmonies as representing another key centre, and this made an orderly succession of key centres the new basis of organization. Then the human mind grew to be able to discern these principles of order when composers dispensed with the sounding of the concrete harmonies and only represented them by ornamental procedures; through which the trained mind can perceive and infer the groups of harmonic successions which are implied and recognize the respective keys to which they belong. Complication yet further expanded the basis of organization as composers approached what may be called the extreme of sophistication, which became attainable by a reversion to the linear system, in which harmony was again suffused by polyphonic methods, and the individual notes of the ornamental formulas themselves are made to represent centres of activity and have their own harmonization; which harmonization subsists in spite of its apparent clashing with the

harmonization of other ornamental notes, which the mind is able to endure because it intellectually segregates the notes which represent different systems and allots them to their respective centres and so keeps them apart from one another. The superimposition of device upon device is like a perpetual budding from a germ cell, with the additional analogy to things physical, that each generation is always consistent in its characteristics and identifiable. The quickness of the human mind at grasping the especial type of organization which it has to accept, in order to follow the idea of the composer, is one of its most extraordinary capacities; as is the development of the art which enables the adequately equipped composer to be sure that his most subtle sophistications are sure to meet with understanding from the auditors who are equally well equipped. When an ignoramus looks at a full score of any big modern work and sees there the hundreds of notes that are to be sounded in a few seconds, and sounded also for the fraction of a second and no more, most of which are not harmony notes but only suggest them by the way they are grouped, and yet convey to the qualified auditor a perfect sense of orderliness and coherence, it will either give him the sense of the amazing development of art and of human capacity to follow what is offered to it as art, or incredulity, in accordance with his temperamental bias.

But it has to be remembered that, in order to find any method of organization serviceable, the auditor must have gone through some of the steps which enable him to follow the procedure. It is here that certain perplexing incapacities will find their explanation. It frequently happens that a person of considerable musical culture is amazed to find that some passage which he regards as one of the noblest and most moving in the whole range of art leaves the majority of average audiences entirely blank and unmoved—and this

may happen with people who are constantly hearing music. It happens most frequently when a person who cultivates late phases of instrumental music is brought into contact with the finest choral music of the sixteenth century. The meaning and purpose of the several motions have not come under his attention and he has no clue whatever to the scheme of organization. The contempt with which the complacent classicist of the sonata period looked down upon the form of the fugue was owing to musicians having broken altogether for the time with organization of the fugal type and having become incapable of listening to and understanding the motions of two or three independent parts at once. For here it will be as well to observe that every step in the building up of art by the addition of notes to a scale, of new chords which were devised, and of methods and devices of all sorts had special functions when they were invented, just as much as every conceivable feature in architecture had a function. But mankind always forgot the original meaning very soon and applied the various features to other purposes, most of which were quite without meaning and merely served for barren show. And it is this forgetfulness which makes so many people totally indifferent to the finest artistic achievements. They are expressed in a language they do not understand.

It must be obvious that there is a very close connection between the type and complexity of organization and the standard of mental development of those for whom it is devised. The study of folk-music and the music of primitive savages is very enlightening in this respect; especially in respect of the organization, which is based in great part on musical phrases. As might be naturally supposed the earliest sign of awakening intelligence is found in mere reiteration of some melodic or rhythmic formula. This is essentially the primitive savage type and is met with in extraordinary per-

sistency under varied conditions. It is a most remarkable fact that such undisguised reiteration is a conspicuous feature of the music of relatively undeveloped races in the present day, who have adopted the advanced methods of modern music with remarkable success. It is the more curious as the composers of the more developed races do not resort to such naïve reiteration except as a basis for presenting a phrase or passage in different lights by variation. And with the undeveloped races their reversion to a primitive practice, especially at points of great excitement, is an unconscious admission of the nearness of their temperamental average to that of their primitive ancestry. As a principle mere reiteration is hardly worthy of the name of organization, it might rather be called a preliminary procedure, or a means of keeping things going. It does not imply any mental development, it only implies some kind of definition and capacity of recognition. The first step toward real organization comes when a phrase or short passage of melody is alternated with another which serves as a contrast with it, and returns again to the first phrase to give the sense of completeness. Yet even such a simple principle of orderliness needed considerable progress in mental grasp before it could be attained. It might perhaps be regarded as the significant feature which distinguishes folk-music from savage music. Folk-music is indeed a very considerable advance on the music of primitive savages, and it shows the growth of power to attain to real orderliness, as the basis of art, by the employment of simple and clear forms of organization, which are evolved quite irrespective of any collusion or imitation between the races that resorted to it. As folk-music is always melodic it did not admit of great variety of elaboration in the organization of the tunes, yet there was sufficient to illustrate the average disposition toward intellectuality of the races which the

songs represent. Races which are notable for the quickness of their intelligence and their delight in the exercise of it show it in the closeness and interest of the structure of their folk-music, as is the case with Scotch tunes, and those whom imagination, feeling, or sentiment are specially liable to dominate are represented by forms which are vaguer and less elaborately organized. On the side of character, also, it is parenthetically observable that folk tunes reflect the temperamental qualities of the races and localities to which they belong most truthfully—such as the vivacity and love of orderly design of the French, the pathos and pugnacity of the Irish, the sober simplicity and deliberation of the English, the sentimental reflectiveness of Germans, the spasmodic vehemence of Hungarians, and the love of elaborate ornamentation of Orientals. Slavonic folk-music is also most characteristic, but it is most difficult to define. It has in most cases a flavor of the playful unconsciousness of youth, simplicity of structure and a kind of pathetic gaiety. This close connection between a race or a geographical attitude of mind and its folk-music is really a foretaste of the connection which persisted throughout the whole story of art's evolution. A people's music so accurately represents its temperamental qualities that, if there was any doubt about a race's character, the music they favor would solve it. In folk-music the element of rhythm figures very considerably; and, as it is a subject about which a great deal of confusion of mind seems to exist, it is advisable to give a little attention to it. It is a defining and vitalizing influence of the highest importance; for it is only through rhythm that the individual factors of organization become identifiable. It is through the grouping of beats into two, three, four, five, six, and so on that the nuclei which are the basis of organization are grouped into coherent and distinguishable factors. Inasmuch as a

note is nothing by itself, and only becomes something when it has relation to another note, and, as these notes must succeed one another in time, it is necessary to have some means of defining the respective lengths of time which are to be relatively allotted to the respective notes; and rhythm is the process by which the progress of sounds in time is marked off and organized. Without it there would be mere vagueness and confusion.

This is the aspect of rhythm from the point of view of organization. That was not its object in the beginning, but to minister to expression of feeling. All people who have not attained to an advanced stage of culture and intelligence delight in rhythm; and the sphere it occupies in folk-music is enlightening; for its preponderance varies considerably. In some folk-music it is always conspicuous, as in Hungarian and French folk-music; in some it is only moderately apparent and rarely aggressive, except when the words associated with it imply vigorous action, as in English and German folk-music. There are obvious implications which are suggested by the fact. The aggressively rhythmic music shows a predisposition for instrumental music, and the less rhythmic for vocal music. The former represents the music of action and the latter the music of inner feeling. The former secular feeling and the latter serious feeling associated with religion of some sort.

Rhythm suggests bodily activity. Its essential function is to represent the expression of feelings by motions of the body, arms, legs, or any part that can move freely. This is verified by the fact that rhythmic music impels people to join in with hands and feet, and this is also the underlying basis of dance music; for the object of dance music is to inspire people to rhythmic activity, and its connection with expression is verified by the fact that so much dance music, even in the

earliest times, has been mimetic. The position of rhythm in artistic music is strange, for it is undeniable that the preponderant impulse of serious composers is to hide it away in sophistications. Indeed, for many centuries it was, possibly unconsciously, kept at bay. Pure unsophisticated rhythm belongs to the primitives. It is not the form of expression congenial to self-respecting and developed races when they are taking anything serious in hand. This is partly because it does, as above remarked, represent physical expression, which is not the type to which intellectual people are prone. Developed minds want to convince by argument; primitive people by force. Moreover, rhythm is not progressive. In its direct forms it is probably much as it was with the cave dwellers. Its limitations are obvious; and its simple forms are indicative of a primitive state in those that use it.

As a matter of fact, it seems to be the ingrained impulse of composers whose feeling for their art is highly developed to disguise it, as though the frank use of it was commonplace and cheap. What appears to be progress in rhythm is indeed not in rhythm itself, but in that very sophistication. It is like the sophistication of metre in the blank verse of Shakespeare or Milton, or even in the lyric poetry of Shelley and Keats and later poets, which makes English lyrics so difficult for inefficient and unliterary composers to set. The parallel in poetry and verse is complete. For the jog-trot of those indifferent poets who make an appeal to the undeveloped minds of the herd is poetry of a low order, just as is the rhythmic commonplace of cheap-minded composers.

The higher type of composer deals with rhythm as with everything else. He uses the simple basis of a definite rhythm to build upon it something interesting. What would be commonplace and familiar is made worthy of the name of art by its presentation in rela-

tion to other rhythms, or in combination with an independent grouping of strong and weak beats which gives it new significance. Such sophistication of rhythm was very difficult in the times when music was confined to one melodic part. But it became easy when choral music developed into contrapuntal treatment of melodic voice parts, and it attained in later days to the highest pitch of interest when the harmonic style was reinfused with polyphonic methods, and full opportunities were afforded for combining different rhythms at once, and ordinary rhythms in one part could be made quite interesting or amusing through their association with other parts which are purposely at variance with the essential rhythm. By such procedure composers succeeded in avoiding the use of common property and could enjoy the inestimable services of rhythm as a vitalizer and a definer without condescending from their high estate. The reticence of the higher type of composer in the matter of rhythm, and his tendency to refrain from such undisguised relaxation, is curiously confirmed by the history of sacred music. It is a very singular fact that, in the long period of over five centuries, during which church music was developed from the most primitive conditions till it manifested such wonderful perfection of spirit and workmanship at the end of the sixteenth century, composers, guided by instinct rather than conscious reasoning, always endeavored to suppress or hide the sense of rhythm. As music began to grow from the doubling of plain-song at the intervals of fifths and fourths and octaves (which was so convenient to the different calibres of the voices which had to sing it), by filling in the steps between one principal note and another with shorter notes, and so developed primitive counterpoint, composers soon began to aim at giving the effect of independence to human voices by making them move at different times and in different directions; by mak-

ing use of syncopations, suspensions, dotted notes that overlapped one another, and all such procedures as obscured the rhythmic element. And even when, owing to special circumstances, they were driven to make parts move simultaneously, as in later harmonic procedure, they made the chords halt and move again, and even occasionally drop the principal accent, to obviate the sense of rhythmic lilt—as may be observed in some of the hymn tunes of Orlando Gibbons, which have had to be altered and made quite commonplace in modern times to suit the mechanical habits of modern congregations.

This curious persistence may be explained by the fact that devotional feeling is not demonstrative. Western people in really devotional frame of mind do not gesticulate or fling their arms and legs about to express their feelings, but are bowed down in spiritual ecstasy. The music was the true expression of the spirit; and, till secular music began to react upon religious music after the beginning of the seventeenth century, the music of the services of the church might fairly be described as anti-rhythmic. And it still remains a fact that whenever rhythm makes its appearance prominently in music which purports to be devotional it is a proof of its insincerity. But there are always many things which concur in achieving a big result, and it must be admitted that conjoined with the instinct which avoided rhythm in religious music was the fact that all the early religious music was essentially vocal; and vocal music in its purest simplicity is comparatively unrhythmic. It learnt definite and consistent rhythm from instrumental music when that came to be cultivated with vigor from the beginning of the seventeenth century onward. It is true that dance music was sung, and that the *Balletti* of such a delightful composer as Morley have wonderful rhythmic verve; but such compositions represent the time when musical

expansion was moving strongly in a secular direction and instruments were beginning to exert their influence. The greater madrigals of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries still illustrate the inherent peculiarity of pure choral music and give ample proofs of the composers' endeavors to disguise the rhythmic element and represent the underlying principle of the grouping of strong and weak beats without adopting obvious rhythmic organization. Instrumental music, on the other hand, inevitably implies rhythm. In its most primitive phases it was probably nothing but rhythm, and that rhythm of a perfectly frank and undisguised description. In its early artistic phases it was generally full of rhythmic life without obtruding the rhythm as a special means of appeal to the audience, as is the case in modern popular music. The deeply ingrained habits of counterpoint which still persisted in the eighteenth century made even suites of dance tunes so full of texture in detail that the rhythm was rather the basis of the definition of pulses than a factor in the effect. If the story of modern music were followed up with special reference to rhythm it would be found that the aim of all composers who took their art seriously has been to avoid the commonplaces and to sophisticate rhythm in such a way as to make it serve as an additional source of expression, instead of a mere mechanical incitement to movement. The increase of orchestral instruments offered ample opportunities to sophisticate rhythms in a manner analogous to the charming effects of early choral music, in which syncopation and cross-rhythms add a genuine interest to the fundamental rhythm and seem to play with the hearers by making them feel that one rhythm is superimposed on another. Even in actual modern dance tunes of the best kind the impulse to add something independent to the fundamental rhythm is found in such devices as tying over the

last note of a group of three in a valse to the strong beat of the succeeding rhythmic group, while the essential rhythm is maintained by the bass or other instruments of the accompaniment, and composers have even successfully devised such attractive ingenuities as the effect of three long beats being superimposed on two groups of the three lesser beats of the established rhythm. The well-known combination in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* of a minuet and a valse each in triple time and a country dance in $\frac{4}{4}$ time is one of the most ingenious illustrations of such combined rhythms. The essential basis of all such devices is the sophistication of the obvious, which is the natural impulse of every true composer.

Such sophistication is, however, ultimately dependent on the development of harmony into its latest polyphonic phases, which represent the furthest progress of intellectual perception in the races which make use of it. The use of harmonies systematized on the basis of tonalities is the highest development in respect of expression that has been attained in art and it has become a means of widening the possibilities of organization which seems to be unlimited. It is said of a famous English philosopher, whose range of intellectual power was abnormal, that he wept because he thought that the range of melodic variety was exhaustible. He was possibly one of the many whose musical sense is not sufficiently developed to understand progressions of harmony. For, if he had known that every note of every melody is capable of being accompanied by an immense number of different harmonies, probably several dozens apiece, and that each different harmony is capable of altering altogether the expressive character of the melodic note in relation to other notes of the melody, and that the changes in expression not only apply to notes which are contiguous but to notes that are several steps removed,

he need not have been distressed at the limitations of the musical scale as developed by European peoples. But this does not by any means exhaust the possibilities of expressive effect, because the same harmony will have a different effect if it is in close order or in open order; if it is in close order in a high part of the scale or a low part of the scale; and the melodic significance is also variable with the rhythmic treatment to which it is subjected. The full force of harmonies to minister to expression was dependent on the systematization of chords on a tonal basis. This had been in the air for a long time before composers definitely grappled with the problem, as may be observed in the splendid use J. S. Bach made of the expressive resources of harmony. But it was the classical masters of the sonata period who dealt with the matter effectually. They based their scheme of organization on the recognition of a complete classification of the harmonic contents of any key; which implied a recognition of the actual degrees of importance and of the functions of each individual chord. This scheme also required as its most essential guaranty a very strict recognition and observance of each key that became a factor in the form; and also the apprehension of chords as chords.

But when the true polyphonic spirit invaded the sacred precincts of the sonata type, and means were supplied to slip from diatonic chord to chromatic chord, and even for a composer to lead the pleasingly bewildered hearer into some unimaginable remote key and back, it began to dawn on people that the achievement of even such an admirable principle of organization as the sonata form had not landed musicians in their final haven, but that in reality the sonata period was merely one of transition—a kind of interim, like that of the aria form in opera, when men forebore for a time to address themselves to expression, and projected their minds to the solution of the essential problems of or-

ganization. The wonderful success which the sonata composers achieved in their devoted self-denial led to the unfortunate misconception that musical art was a thing which stood by itself and was self-sufficient and had no reference in its highest manifestations to anything outside itself. Two things corrected this strange aberration. One was that a race of composers sprang up who filled up the easily managed forms of the sonata type with correct and orthodox passages and deluged the world with utterly barren, empty, artificial and intolerably conventional rigmarole. This, indeed, the world could not put up with, and it turned with not unnatural eagerness to welcome the party who advocated program music. These aspiring people were quite on the right tack, but the resources of art were not as yet built up sufficiently for their purposes, and therefore a great part of their trivial and conventional imitations of scenes and impressions merely made them ridiculous. The necessary revolution came out of the heart of the old régime. The greatest masters of the sonata types of art had always been impelled to infuse their works of the sonata order with human meaning and to suggest a condition of feeling—mournful, cheerful, merry, mischievous, and the like; and Beethoven, the greatest of them all by far, after showing frequent signs of breaking away even as early as the slow movement of his Sonata in D, opus 10, No. 3, finally in his latest sonatas, quartets and symphonies produced some of the most wonderful human documents ever achieved by man, in which he expressed the workings of his own innermost feelings, the portrayal of his aspirations, his perplexities in face of the problems of life, his deep cogitations and moods, and his hopes for the destiny of humanity. Here, indeed, he had found the true sphere of musical expression. It was the expression of his innermost being; and his music rose to such unparalleled heights

because he dealt with his own self, which he was bound to know better than most people know themselves because he was so shut off from the world by his deafness; and it may be added that the music is so profoundly interesting also because he was personally such an extraordinary and intensely interesting character.

Beethoven occupied the unique position of consummating the sonata type and giving the impulse to the artistic development which reëstablished the full vigor of human expression and feeling. He reëstablished the right of ideas to be expressed by music and indicated the manner in which it was to be done. His ardent nature rebelled against conventions. He sought to eliminate all dead and inert matter, to get rid of the formal types of accompaniment which were everybody's property, and to make everything subserve to the expression of the idea. It was probably this which impelled him in his later works to revert to the fugue —that is, to the real fugue of the type of John Sebastian Bach, and not to the bastard form in which attempts were made to amalgamate it with the harmonic scheme of sonata form, which caused the introduction of the conventional passages of that form which were totally alien to the real fugue form. In the genuine fugue form, as illustrated by him and Bach, all the texture of the work is alive and there are no conventional formulas of accompaniment, and Beethoven's point of view enabled him to go right back, as it were, beyond the historical episode of the sonata and bring the true fugue again to life and use it as a most concentrated means of expression. There is a further and very striking aspect of the question which is that Beethoven, in bringing the fugue form into the field again, anticipated and gave impulse to the revival of the polyphonic methods which is such a conspicuous feature of the most recent development in art: and yet further, his use of the fugue form illustrated that

gravitation of artistic development which was to find such splendid accomplishment in the later music dramas of Wagner, in which the polyphonic treatment and the use of the leit-motif form a gigantic expansion of the essential principles of the supremely elastic form of the fugue.

But even these significant facts do not exhaust the aspects in which Beethoven anticipated later artistic developments. It is a very strange fact that after his deafness was quite established his sense of tone color continued to expand. Even in comparatively early works he had shown gravitation toward romantically characteristic effects of instrumentation, as, for instance, in the familiar and supremely wonderful color scheme of the scherzo of the C minor symphony. But after he had quite lost his hearing his color sense grew in richness and depth and variety to a bewildering extent. His mind seemed to be specially occupied with finding tone colors which intensified the expression in quite a new way, as, for instance, in the huge slow movement of the sonata in B flat, opus 106, in the last movement of the sonata in C minor, opus 111, and in the slow movement of the Choral Symphony. Prior to his time there had been a great deal of inert matter in orchestral scoring. The functions of wind instruments were indeed defined, in so far as they were used either as actual solo instruments or more often to supply a pleasant continuity of tone in agreeable colors, while the strings did most of the actual talking. But the standard of execution of the players, as well as the technique of orchestration, was not advanced enough to bring the wind instruments fairly into the operation on an equality with the strings, and they were made to play what was definitely serviceable to the scheme, but had in itself no musical definition and purpose. The greater part of the advance that has since taken place in orchestration consists in making every member of

the orchestra contribute to the complex of polyphony by playing actual and apt musical passages. It implied the growth of texture toward vitality in every part of the artistic scheme, and a development of organization of the very subtlest description. For it must be kept in mind that the employment of instruments of diverse tone color in the modern manner does not imply their constant employment, but their apt employment only; which is so contrived by the genius of composers who can really think in orchestras that the tone qualities affect the sensibilities of the hearers to the utmost by their relations to one another. Even the feeblest intelligence would be capable of discerning the fact that great effects of color are made through juxtaposition. A very vivid piece of coloring is not vivid because the individual colors are vivid, but because various colors are disposed so as to give particular colors their utmost effect upon the sensibilities. A glowing red does not glow of itself but because the sensibilities have been so affected by other colors that they have become highly susceptible to red. Groups of nerves are affected in various ways by tone colors, and the secret of art is so to use the various tone colors that each shall minister in full measure to the effect of others. And the secret of expression in art in this particular department is that the composer who has that very highly organized faculty of perception of relations of colors uses just those relations in their various degrees which intensify the susceptibility of the human auditor to the quality of the ideas he wants to express.

In this field there is a very wide and interesting opportunity for special study, as the average of color tendencies is a very striking means of gauging the disposition and personality of composers. Thus the stern, almost ascetic, colors of Brahms, varied by touching gleams of tenderness and beauty, express his person-

ality most exactly. Beethoven undoubtedly changed his average of color as he developed his personality. In his earlier works he was genial and bright, after the manner of the sonata composers, and made use of the cheerful coloring that suited a cultured and prosperous aristocracy. In his middle period he became warmer and more serious; in his latest period he was sometimes grim and fierce, sometimes deep and solemn, but often tender with the depth of longing and the earnestness of his aspiration. But who cannot read the character of a composer through his average color scheme? The flighty, empty-headed trickster with his sparkling piccolo and his gas-jet noises on violins, and the bombastic vulgarian posing as a man of great feeling with his roars of blatant brass; the oversensitized hedonist with his delicate subtleties, mainly in transparent pearl-grays; and so on. We are almost inclined to forget that it is all, or nearly all, a matter of relations; it is only not a matter of relations when the music is false. When the composer does try to make his effects by violence and what he supposes to be the intrinsic power of tone-quality nobody is permanently taken in. That the basis of color effect is relation is a thing man is learning every day in the infinite variety of a gorgeous sunset and in the luxuriant blaze of his own flowerbeds. Indeed, the principle of relativity in art is nowhere likely to be more readily felt than in the matter of color.

It is more difficult to apprehend in matters of form and organization. Yet it ought to be easy to perceive that the whole object of organization is to put things in their right places. It is just as in the color scheme: the effect of a work of art, as has been said before, does not depend upon intrinsic interest of individual moments, but on the relation of every moment to every other moment. If the relations are false the impression is marred and the idea fails to carry conviction.

But it follows from this that there had to be a sweeping change in the generally accepted views of the universal applicability of the sonata forms. They were no doubt admirable as types of abstract design; they were examples of approximate perfection in musical organization; but, when the time came again after the sonata period to make music express ideas, it became evident, with the assistance of Beethoven's insight, that special ideas required types of organization which were specially adapted to the ideas. Men humbly ventured on compositions which did not represent the august dignity of the sonata order. They tried in small ways to represent their feelings and ideas. They found the sonata forms much too big; the prescriptive rights of so aristocratic an organization entailing such a lot of formalities; and they had of sheer necessity to find some forms more apt and compact. The unique genius of Chopin led the way. Surrounded by an atmosphere of romanticism, and entirely free, as far as we can see, from the influence of the sonata spirit, his strange and subtle mind sought types of form which were quite independent of tradition. Very often the form seems to grow out of the musical ideas; at any rate it is easy to feel that form and utterance progressed simultaneously in his processes of inspiration. This attitude toward original methods of organization is perceptible in a very large range of his compositions—the ballads, the impromptus, the mazurkas, but in the finest and subtlest shape in the best of the preludes. There, indeed, can always be felt the underlying impulse to express some feeling or idea which is not purely and only musical, and also the exact aptness of the form in which it is expressed. Hardly any modern composers have excelled Chopin in this respect; it is his greatest contribution to the evolution of musical art. But even classical composers, composers essentially built up on the great traditions, tacitly admitted the

gravitation of art back to its rightful position; Mendelssohn in his songs without words and symphonies, Schumann in vast numbers of movements of all calibres for pianoforte and even in movements of symphonies, such as the slow movement of the Rhenish and the whole of the D major; Brahms in his compact and well-considered piano pieces, and movements in his chamber music; and later on the host of experimentalizing composers in every branch of art, all bent on expressing something that stirs them, and all bent on finding special ways of organizing what they have to say. The most conclusive illustrations are naturally in the branch of song as cultivated by modern composers. Here the theories of the few faithful defenders of the old strongholds are obviously void; for it is impossible to imagine anyone being so preposterously idiotic as to try and write a song in sonata form. The scheme of organization must inevitably, in such a form of art, follow absolutely the meaning of the words and the course of the dramatic development. As a matter of fact, the same connection with words rules the situation as far as regards the artistic organization in all directions from anthems and church music up to the colossal scores of music dramas. The composer has now not only to provide diction, method, artistic texture, color, but also new types of form. It may, indeed, be said that the highest aim of the composer, after the discovery of something worth expressing, is to find some new scheme—some new distribution of the architectural elements of his musical work—which will present his ideas in forms which will attract the attention and keep the interest of the highest class of minds.

The situation may be said to round off the story of music's development so far. For the colossal accumulation of resources and means of beautifying and vitalizing ideas serves not only for utterance but also to

widen the scope and variety of schemes of artistic organization—and the individual composer becomes personally responsible in that respect as well as for the feeling and the artistic details.

But the indebtedness of latter-day composers to the devotion of those who went before is not exhausted by these accomplishments. For there are many features of art to which successive generations of composers have contributed in the fashioning, and which ought not to be overlooked, though they cannot be dealt with in detail in a summary. One of the subtlest and most interesting is the differentiation of various styles. The instinct which impelled composers in this connection was always to find the most perfect adjustment of resources to environment. In other words, to express what they had to say in the ways which were most convenient and effective for the instruments which had to play it, and most suitable to the audience to which it was to be addressed in the place where it had to be performed.

At first composers' ingenuity was exercised in one style only, that of choral music, limited also mainly to sacred music. When that was more or less perfected in the space of some five centuries, instrumental secular style began to emerge; at first leaning on the methods and devices which composers had found out in choral music, and then by degrees, as instrumental music learned to stand alone, making it more completely apt for performance by instruments; which process has gone on till the present day and is still going on. Then, soon after instrumental style began to branch off from the parent stem of choral music, operatic style began to be laboriously devised, and is by degrees still being perfected in the sphere of music drama; then followed the distinct style for various solo instruments, as the style of organ music, the style for various kinds of orchestral music, for chamber music, for domestic

music, songs, concert-platform music, various types of modern church music, in ever-increasing variety, each style being the most perfect adaptation to the conditions of presentment and the qualities of instruments as time goes on.

Another development of great interest is that of thematic material. Such things as subjects were hardly thought of at first in artistic conditions, as choral music was not adapted to clear definition. That quality began to manifest itself when rhythm began to play its part in instrumental music. Then melodious passages, which were clearly recognizable in themselves, began to make their appearance in operatic arias, but they were for a long time defined more by the conventional periods indicated by cadences of various degrees of finality than by their individual character. This peculiarity of defining subjects persisted almost till the end of the sonata period in the latter part of Beethoven's life, when he began to divine the possibility of subjects being identifiable for themselves without artificial conventions for marking their boundaries, and gave the impulse to that practice of concentrating interest in short phrases and figures which have intrinsic definition by reason of their characteristic intervals and rhythms, which has become the most universal trait of all later music, gathering force in the romantic period and being developed further by the latest representative composers, who use color, chord positions, even modulation, as well as melodic features, as factors in making their thematic nuclei stand out from their context, and serve the purpose of texts to their discourses—the said texts serving also to suggest as clearly as possible what the composer has in his mind, which he desires to convey to his audience in the most vivid and permanent forms.

It is inevitable that all this huge development of artistic resources, which has taken so many centuries

of patient and devoted concentration of faculties, should bewilder the ardent and eager latter-day composer who is longing to express himself at once.

In many cases his invention and spontaneity seem to be paralyzed by the amount there is to learn. On the one hand, it causes academicism in the more conscientious, and, on the other, it causes rebellion. All the 'isms' of contemporary art of all kinds are the result of a kind of indigestion which is the outcome of the superabundance of resources of all kinds. The highest manifestations of art can only be produced by those who have survived the long process of learning to understand the meaning and purpose of artistic procedures and still have some vitality left. But the public is by this time quite incapable of distinguishing between what is built upon genuine foundations and what is pure recklessness. They like recklessness, and the power to recognize the mind which builds so difficult an edifice of individuality on loyalty to his art requires too much education. So many contrive the appearance of originality by the easy process of merely doing what they have been advised not to do. They cry out against the soul-subduing labor of having to learn how to do the things that are worth doing in the best way. So artistic progress becomes mainly the process of learning from making mistakes, which brings it into line with all the ordinary forms of social progress. It becomes a wild hurly-burly of impetuous adventurousness, in which the ardent explorers do not even allow themselves time to find out whether the new country they propose to explore is worth exploring. But without doubt there is a residue of the real quality when the disposition of the composer is also of fine quality. The 'new paths' now entail the motive of the composer being more identifiable than ever. They betray themselves in spite of themselves. The pedant cannot escape from his pedantry, the conven-

tional-minded from his conventions, the sentimentalist from his sentimentalities, the vain man from his vanities, the sensualist from his cravings, the insolent from his insolence, or the commercial from his advertisements. The general repudiation of standards leaves them all without disguise, and the man who understands music can identify the individual and his type of society and what it is worth through the music he puts forward as representing him.

It entails a change in the position of musical art which took place in the painting art centuries earlier, and shows what a modern thing music is. Men no longer expect music to be the expression of noble and exalted thoughts only, but accept it as the expression of all kinds of moods, emotions, feelings and aspirations, whether they be little and intimate, satyric and strange, wildly extravagant, genially humorous, pugnacious, pacific, pastoral, even uproariously domestic. It is a new kind of differentiation in which there is inevitably a new kind of waste. But the ideal public, which is infinitely longer than it is broad, will ultimately apply the judgment based on the experience of generations, and will sift out the products of the genuinely artistic beings from the follies of the heedless ones. The purists are in despair, but those whose optimism is invulnerable can look forward in the unshaken belief that art will go on expanding healthily, in spite of the confusion of tongues, through the inextinguishable passion of true composers to find the most perfect and complete expression of their own personalities.

C. HUBERT H. PARRY.

October, 1914.

CONTRIBUTORS AND COLLABORATORS

FOR VOLUMES I, II AND III

Franz Bellinger, Ph.D.	F. B.
M.-D. Calvocoressi	M.-D. C.
W. Dermot Darby	W. D. D.
Cecil Forsyth	C. F.
Henry F. Gilbert	H. F. G.
Leland Hall	L. H.
G. W. Harris	G. W. H.
Edward Burlingame Hill	E. B. H.
A. Walter Kramer	A. W. K.
Edward Kilenyi	E. K.
Benjamin Lambord	B. L.
Frederick H. Martens	F. H. M.
Eduardo Marzo	E. M.
Daniel Gregory Mason	D. G. M.
Hiram Kelly Moderwell	H. K. M.
Ivan Narodny	I. N.
Ernest Newman	E. N.
Sir C. Hubert H. Parry	C. H. H. P.
Francis Rolt-Wheeler	F. R.-W.
César Saerchinger	C. S.
Amelia von Ende	A. v. E.
William Wallace	W. W.
Leslie Whittlesey	L. W.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME ONE

PAGE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION v

INTRODUCTION TO THE NARRATIVE HISTORY OF MUSIC BY C. HUBERT H. PARRY xxv

PART I. PRELIMINARIES

CHAPTER

I. PRIMITIVE MUSIC 1

Music in nature—Theories of the origin of music—Intervals and scales; contrast—The aborigines of Carribea, Polynesia, Samoa, Africa—The rhythmic element: music and the dance; instruments of percussion—Harmonic traces—Wind instruments and their scales; the xylophone—Instruments of semi-civilized peoples—The North American Indian—Influence of modern culture on savage music.

II. EXOTIC MUSIC 42

Significance of exotic music—Classification; Aztecs and Peruvians—The Orient: China and Hindustan, the Mohammedans—Exotic instruments—Music as religious rite; music and dancing—Music and customs; Orient and Occident.

III. THE MOST ANCIENT CIVILIZED NATIONS 64

Conjecture and authority—The Assyrians and Babylonians; instruments; scales—The Hebrews—The Egyptians; social aspects; Plato's testimony; instruments—Egyptian influence on Greek culture and its musical significance.

IV. THE MUSIC OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS 88

Significance of Greek music—Greek conception of music; mythical records—Music in social life; folk-song; general characteristics of Greek music—Systems and scales—Pythagoras' theories; later theorists: Aristoxenus to Ptolemy—Periods of Greek composition; the *nomoi;* lyricism; choral dancing and choral lyricism; the drama—Greek instruments; notation.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME ONE

PART II. BEGINNINGS

CHAPTER PAGE

V. THE AGE OF PLAIN-SONG 128

Music in the Roman empire—Sources of early Christian music; the hymns of St. Ambrose—Hebrew traditions—Psalmody, responses, antiphons; the liturgy; the Gregorian tradition; the antiphonary and the gradual; sequences and tropes—Ecclesiastical modes; early notation.

VI. THE BEGINNINGS OF POLYPHONY 160

The third dimension in music—'Antiphony' and Polyphony; magadizing; organum and diaphony, parallel and oblique—Guido d'Arezzo and his reputed inventions; solmisation; progress of notation—Johannes Cotto and the *Ad organum faciendum;* contrary motion and the beginning of true polyphony—Measured music; mensural notation—*Faux-bourdon, gymel;* forms of mensural composition.

VII. SECULAR MUSIC IN THE MIDDLE AGES 186

Popular music; fusion of secular and ecclesiastical spirit; Paganism and Christianity; the epic—Folksong; early types in France, *complainte,* narrative song, dance song; Germany and the North; occupational songs—Vagrant musicians; jongleurs, minstrels; the love song—Troubadours and Trouvères; Adam de la Halle—The Minnesinger; the Meistersinger; influence on Reformation and Renaissance.

PART III. THE POLYPHONIC PERIOD

VIII. THE RISE OF THE NETHERLAND SCHOOLS . . . 226

The Netherland style; the *Ars Nova;* Maschault and the Paris school; the papal ban on figured music—The Gallo-Belgian school; early English polyphony; John Dunstable; Dufay and Binchois; other Gallo-Belgians—Okeghem and his school—Josquin des Près; merits of the Netherland Schools.

IX. THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE 258

Spirit of the Renaissance—*Trovatori* and *cantori a liuto;* The Florentine *Ars Nova;* Landino; *caccia, ballata, madrigal* —The fifteenth century; the Medici; Netherland influence; popular song forms—Adrian Willaert and the new madrigal—Orazio Vecchi and the dramatic madrigal.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME ONE

CHAPTER PAGE

X. THE GOLDEN AGE OF POLYPHONY 284

Invention of music printing—The Reformation—The immediate successors of Josquin; Adrian Willaert and the Venetian school; Germany and England—Orlando di Lasso —Palestrina; his life—The Palestrina style; the culmination of vocal polyphony—Conclusion.

PART IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF HARMONY

XI. THE BEGINNINGS OF OPERA AND ORATORIO . . . 324

The forerunners of opera—The Florentine reform of 1600; the 'expressive' style; Peri and Caccini; the first opera; Cavalieri and the origin of the oratorio—Claudio Monteverdi: his life and his works.

XII. NEW FORMS: VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL . . . 348

Résumé of the sixteenth century—Rhythm and form; the development of harmony; figured bass—The organ style; *canzona da sonar; ricercar; toccata; sonata da chiesa;* great organists—The genesis of violin music; *canzona* and *sonata*—The *sonata da camera;* the suite—Music for the harpsichord—The opera in the seventeenth century; Heinrich Schütz.

XIII. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 388

The musicians of the century—Henry Purcell and music in England—Italy: Alessandro Scarlatti; Arcangelo Corelli; Domenico Scarlatti—The beginnings of French opera: the *Ballet-comique de la reine;* Cambert and Perrin—Jean Baptiste de Lully—Couperin and Rameau—Music in Germany: Keiser, Mattheson, and the Hamburg opera; precursors of Bach.

XIV. HANDEL AND THE ORATORIO 418

The consequences of the seventeenth century: Bach and Handel—Handel's early life; the opera at Hamburg; the German oratorio—The Italian period, *Rodrigo, Agrippina,* and *Resurrezione*—Music in England; Handel as opera composer and impresario—Origins of the Handelian oratorio; from 'Esther' to 'The Messiah'—Handel's instrumental music; conclusion.

XV. JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH 448

Introduction—The life of Bach—Bach's polyphonic skill and the qualities of his genius—Bach's contribution to the art of music and the forms he employed—The revision of keyboard technique and equal temperament—Bach's relation to the history of music.

INDEX. See Volume III.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. See Volume III.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN VOLUME ONE

	FACING PAGE
King René and his Musical Court (in colors) .	*Frontispiece*
Orchestra of Pan's Pipes (Aboriginal)	22
Old Japanese Print: 'Girl of the Old Kingdom playing the Harp'	58
Ancient Egyptian Fresco showing Instruments in Use .	82
Greek Flute and Kithara Players (in colors)	96
The Contest between Apollo and Marysas	122
The Organ in the Middle Ages	156
Mediæval French Sculpture showing Trouvères and Jongleurs with Instruments	202
The Tournament of Song in the Wartburg	218
Josquin des Près (photogravure)	252
Altar of the Virgin by Bellini (photogravure)	268
Orlando di Lasso (photogravure)	308
Perluigi da Palestrina (photogravure)	316
'The Concert'; Painting by Giorgione (in colors) . .	328
Claudio Monteverdi (photogravure)	338
Henry Purcell (photogravure)	388
Arcangelo Corelli (photogravure)	396
Jean-Baptiste de Lully (photogravure)	408
Jean-Philippe Rameau (photogravure)	414
Georg Friedrich Händel (photogravure)	438
Johann Sebastian Bach (photogravure)	468

CHAPTER I

PRIMITIVE MUSIC

Music in nature—Theories of the origin of music—Intervals and scales; Contrast—The aborigines of Carribea, Polynesia, Samoa, Africa—The rhythmic element: music and the dance; instruments of percussion—Harmonic traces—Wind instruments and their scales; the xylophone—Instruments of semi-civilized peoples—The North American Indian—Influence of modern culture on savage music.

MUSIC is coeval with the human race. In all probability it precedes spoken language. For music is primarily the expression of emotion; articulate language is the expression of definite thought. And in the process of evolution emotion precedes thought. The beginnings of music are to be found in Nature herself. The howling of the winds, the humming of insects, the cries of animals, the songs of birds must all be considered as elemental music, inasmuch as they contain the two fundamental elements thereof: 'rhythm' and 'tone.'

Rhythm is the more or less regular division of time by beats or strokes. The heart beats in a regular rhythm; there is the rhythm of the raindrops; man walks with a rhythmic stride; the waves beat upon the shore in a solemn and impressive rhythm; the drumming of the partridge; the chirping of the crickets; the tapping of the woodpecker; the muttering of distant thunder, etc.—all these are rhythms, more or less regular divisions of time, marked off by beats or accents.

Now 'tone' is merely a noise which persists at a certain pitch. When we cry out in fear we usually produce a noise, but should we be careful to maintain a steady and equal emission of breath we should produce a tone. In other words, a 'noise' is produced by a rapid and irregular change in the rate of vibration of the

sounding body, whereas a 'tone' is produced by the steady maintenance of a certain rate of vibration for a long enough time for the ear to appreciate its definiteness. That this time need not be very long is proved by the ease with which we grasp as tones certain very short notes used in music; grace notes, for instance. Many noises, in fact, upon analysis appear to be collections of heterogeneous tonal fragments which succeed each other with such rapidity and eccentricity as to preclude the recognition of their tonal elements, as such.

Such animal cries as the roaring of lions, the baying of wolves, the screeching of parrots, or the barking of dogs must be classed as mere noises. While they are frequently of rhythmic interest, they contain too little of the tonal element to be regarded musically. On the other hand, the humming of certain insects, which produces a definite tone, the whistling and singing of many birds, the musical cries of certain monkeys as related in Darwin, and even on occasion the crying of the wind, must all be regarded as 'natural music.'

The wind with its fitful and irregular howling usually produces mere noise, but there are times when it blows with such a steady intensity through the forest that a definite tone is produced. One reads with interest and sympathy in the memoirs of a certain naturalist how he, while listening to the ethereal singing noises produced by myriads of small insects, imagined that he caught but the lower notes of some elfin symphony, too refined for mortal ears to hear. The songs of the singing birds are very notable examples of 'natural music,' for here the tones are in many instances quite perfect, while the rhythms of many bird-songs are sharply defined and easily noted.

But it is savage or primitive man who claims our greatest interest. Untouched by learning, simple of mind and direct and naïve in his conduct, he is at the same time a part of nature and the ancestor of civilized

man—a being not only endowed with strong rhythmic sense, but with vocal powers far superior in possible variety of inflection to those of any of the animals. His love cries, war songs, and savage laments are as much natural music as are the songs of birds or the cries of animals, and contain, even though crudely, the elements from which civilized music has subsequently been developed. It is with him that our story really begins.

Thus we see that the fundamental elements of music are to be found in nature herself. Man, in his upward and wonderful course from barbarism to civilization, has but cunningly combined these elements, with ever-increasing intellectuality, until there has come to development the glorious art of music as we know it to-day; an art which 'hath the power of making Heaven descend upon earth,' as it is written in the Chinese annals.

I

When we contemplate the life of the savage we are to all intents and purposes observing the lives of our own primitive ancestors. As we see them to-day they without doubt portray for us a phase through which we ourselves passed on our way upward to civilization. No tribe of savages has yet been discovered who have not possessed some elemental fragments of music. No matter how barbaric the people, how rude their manners, or how savage their dispositions, music of some sort plays a vital and significant part in their lives. Most savage tribes have their war cries, songs, and dances; their playful or ceremonious dances; their love or marriage songs, their funeral songs; and lastly, their mysterious and pantheistically religious incantations: prayer songs, appeals to unseen powers, either diabolical or beneficent; to effect the deliverance of

some person from a dread disease, or to bring rain, or abundance of game, etc. All these are to be regarded as primitive music—music which has hardly as yet attained the dignity of an Art.

The collection and study of these fragments has been of great interest to ethnologists and philosophers and has given rise to numerous theories regarding the origin of music. Herbert Spencer gives a physiological explanation of its origin, claiming that intense emotion acts in a particular manner on the vocal and respiratory organs, thereby causing the person thus affected to emit sounds; either high or low, loud or soft, according to the kind of emotion with which he is filled. Beginning with the proposition that 'All music is originally vocal,' he goes on to say: 'All vocal sounds are reproduced by the agency of certain muscles. These muscles, in common with those of the body at large, are excited to contraction by pleasurable and painful feelings.' And again: 'We have here, then, a principle underlying all vocal phenomena, including those of vocal music, and by consequence those of music in general. The muscles that move the chest, larynx, and vocal cords, contracting like other muscles in proportion to the intensity of the feelings; every different contraction of these muscles involving, as it does, a different adjustment of the vocal organs; every different adjustment of the vocal organs causing a change in the sound emitted; it follows that variations of voice are the physiological results of variations of feeling.'

Charles Darwin attempts to explain the existence of primitive music by considering it as a secondary sexual manifestation. He asserts that primitive song was used as a method of charming the opposite sex; that the first songs were love songs, and that from these all others were developed. In the 'Descent of Man' he says: 'The male alone of the tortoise utters a noise, and this only during the season of love. Male alligators

roar or bellow during the same season. Every one knows how much birds use their vocal organs as a means of courtship; and some species likewise perform what may be called instrumental music.' And later: 'Women are thought to possess sweeter voices than men, and so far as this serves as any guide, we may infer that they first acquired musical powers in order to attract the other sex.'

Spencer's explanation is pure theory, based as it is not upon observation of particular facts, but upon a knowledge of certain physiological laws. Darwin's explanation, on the contrary, is evidently based on very careful observations of particular instances of the manifestation of the primitive musical faculty. Nevertheless, however interestingly Darwin writes concerning the origin of music, Spencer's explanation must seem to us the broader, more inclusive and satisfying of the two, inasmuch as it bases the origin of music in a variety of emotional experiences rather than in only one (the love emotion). Darwin, however, says that the emotion of love may give rise to many other emotions of a quite different character, such as rage, jealousy, and triumph; and proceeds to indicate the possible development of various kinds of primitive songs from primitive love songs. It is, however, difficult for us to conceive of the development of war songs, incantations, or howls of grief for the dead as having been developed from primitive love songs.

According to Grosse, music arose from the play instinct. It is one of the forms in which superabundant energy is spent. Most animals, including man, are endowed with more than enough energy than is absolutely necessary to supply their physical needs. This superabundant energy is expressed in different kinds of play. The leaping and diving of the porpoise, the gambolling of dogs, the running of races, and the playing of games among primitive men are examples of the working of

the play instinct. Our modern sports, tennis, football, etc., are also examples of it. According to this theory, singing and dancing first arose as means of diversion from the monotony of existence, as a means of whiling away the time and making life pleasant. This is a most important theory, and while it probably is not wholly true, it contains a large percentage of truth. It is upheld by a great number of writers besides Grosse, and has great significance concerning the origin of all the Arts, including music.

Another theory of the origin of music is that it arose through the imitation by primitive man of bird-songs and other sounds in Nature. It is true that in a collection of the music of many savage tribes there are numerous songs which are certainly imitations of certain bird calls and other animal cries. Particularly are these to be noted in the music of the North American Indians. They have 'Pelican,' 'Crane,' 'Elk,' and 'Buffalo' songs, and even songs imitating the wind in the pines. Their animal songs are to a large extent but slight developments of the cry of the animal himself. This cry was probably first used by the primitive hunter as a decoy, and eventually through frequent use became a recognized song. Although many primitive songs have undoubtedly arisen in this way, the theory of imitation considered as an explanation of the origin of music is somewhat in discredit with ethnologists and philosophers. It is much too partial and there are too many cases to which it certainly cannot apply.

In his study *Arbeit und Rhythmus* Karl Bücher advances the idea that through regular 'work' of any kind 'song' as an accompaniment is naturally induced. The regularity of the 'work,' be it walking, driving a stake, or grinding corn in a hollowed-out stone, supplies one element of music; i. e., rhythm. One element of a tune being present, what more natural than an attempt on the part of the worker to supply the other element and

thus lighten the labor? Especially is this likely to happen if the task require several workers who are obliged to work together, somewhat in unison. Bücher says 'Song is the offspring of labor. It is a means employed to discipline individual activities to the accomplishment of a common task.'

Leaving out of consideration, however, all external stimuli which may or may not have had a determinative influence in the development of primitive music, we cannot but think of the remark of Karl Böckel, which strikes the note of truth: 'Song has its origin in the cry of joy or sorrow; in the need of expression inborn in all peoples in a state of nature.'

II

From the foregoing it is easily to be seen that the first music was vocal. Vocal music has its origin and cause in the elemental urge of Nature, whereas musical instruments, even of the most primitive description, are a subsequent development and spring from the inventive faculty of man. The most elemental cries of primitive peoples consist of a succession of sounds beginning on a high tone and descending by means of a gliding or slurring effect, to a low tone. Such are the cries of the Caribs, and of the aboriginal inhabitants of Australia. Sometimes the gliding of the voice takes an upward turn, as it is said to do among the Polynesian cannibals when gloating over a victim about to be sacrificed. Definite musical tones cannot be recognized in these primitive cries, hence they cannot be accurately written down in the musical notation of civilization. In such simple and elemental cries as these, although no definite musical intervals are to be recognized, it is not long before they appear. In fact, it is easily to be seen in the most primitive music that the production of definite tones, and more or less of a

definite melodic design, is the object toward which the savage mind unconsciously gropes. It must not be supposed that the intervals in use in civilized music are wholly the invention of man. Many of the intervals, such as thirds, fifths, and octaves, are found to be quite perfect in certain animal cries and particularly in bird-song. Consider the two following bird-songs collected by the writer in Massachusetts:

Civilized man has arranged these tones and intervals in diatonic sequences called scales. The scales are his invention, but the majority of the intervals composing them were undoubtedly in frequent use by primitive man from prehistoric times. As Gilman truly observes, 'Definite successions of tones were in use long before they became regular systematic scales.' * The following cry of grief from the southeastern coast of Africa illustrates both the falling inflection of the voice already alluded to as a primitive characteristic and also the use of definite musical intervals. It was noted by Henri A. Junod:

Here is another 'lament'; this one being from New Zealand. The tonal range is somewhat more extensive but the falling inflexion of the voice is well illustrated. The usual savage downward howl occurs at the end:

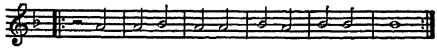
In the 'Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition' by Captain Wilkes the following song is

* Benj. Ives Gilman: Hopi Songs, 1908.

noted. It comes from the island of Arnheim in Polynesia:

The most primitive musical utterances are usually confined to a narrow range. Seconds and thirds are the intervals most frequently used. The songs of the Terra del Fuegians, for instance, do not usually exceed the limits of a third. The song just quoted from Arnheim is, it will be noted, with the exception of the ornamental quirks, confined to the range of a second. The most limited songs in regard to range of intervals, however, appear to be the songs of the Andamanese Islanders. M. V. Portman in a paper on Andamanese music published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* says: 'The only notes in use in their songs are the following, and in this order: The leading note ¼ sharp, the tonic, the tonic ¼ sharp. The whole range of notes is therefore not equal to a superfluous second.' *

The savage mind, being incapable, for the most part, of the development of a musical idea, is satisfied by an incessant repetition of the same phrase. Here is a song of the Caribs as noted by Théodore de Bry. While it is comprised within the interval of a small second, it was repeated sometimes for an hour at a time, with what monotonous effect we can well imagine:



Another Carib song, comprised within the interval of a fourth, is here given. A similar song from Polynesia is also given for purposes of comparison. The two songs are remarkably similar; in fact, almost identical.

* A specimen of Andamanese music is to be found on page 41.

The geographical separation of the Caribs and the Polynesians is so great as to have made intercommunication almost beyond the bounds of possibility. How, then, can the similarity be accounted for? Apparently only by assuming that peoples who live in similar conditions, and whose minds are in a similar state of development, may express themselves in a similar manner:

Germs of the principle of contrast may be found in both the above songs. A second phrase or musical motive has been invented which is sung alternately with the first, thereby relieving the sense of monotony. This was certainly a great step in the development of primitive music. The invention of a second musical phrase, and the contrasting of it with the first, was the unconscious beginning of musical form. For contrast is the basic principle of form in music. The following song from Samoa shows this principle of the contrasting of musical motives very clearly. The two motives are sung by different groups of persons:

The above is a tune in which the contrasting phrases are of equal length, and recur with great regularity, but many tunes are found in which the contrasting motives, or melodic particles, follow each other with

whimsical irregularity, their relative position and recurrence following no law but the feeling of the singer at the moment. Such is this tune of the Macusi Indians of South America:

But in this Eskimo tune, noted by Dr. Kane, one of the earliest Arctic explorers, while the motives follow each other with regularity and are of equal length, each motive is given twice before the contrasting motive occurs:

Two little tunes from Africa may serve as final illustrations of this contrasting phrase principle. These tunes are also interesting inasmuch as both contain a germ of 'ragtime.' The sources of ragtime are to be found in the songs of the American negro slaves, and it is significant to find these hints also present in the songs of the parent African race.

Both the above are taken from 'Up the Niger' by Captain A. F. Mockler-Ferryman.

III

Music and the dance developed side by side. Music is rhythm plus tone; the dance, rhythm plus gesture. In savage life they are well-nigh inseparable. The

dance among civilized peoples is merely a diversion; a form of amusement. Among savages it is much more rarely so. Nearly all ceremonies, whether of a joyful, sorrowful, or religious character, were accompanied by appropriate dances. Many of these dances were of a very elementary character, consisting merely of certain postures, swaying of the body, or leaping into the air. Some dances were imitated from the motions of certain animals, even as some of the primitive songs were imitative of animal cries. Of such nature is the Kangaroo dance of the aborigines of Australia. The men who indulge in the dance imitate the postures and leaps of the kangaroo, and also imitate with their voices the sounds made by that animal. Meanwhile the women sing the following simple tune over and over again, and furnish a rhythmical accompaniment by knocking two pieces of wood together:

Similarly, the North American Indians have eagle dances, dog dances, etc., while the natives of Kamtschatka have a bear dance in which, says Engel,* 'they cleverly imitate not only the attitude and tricks of the bear, but also its voice.' There were also war dances, love dances, funeral dances, and various ceremonial dances. In a sense, all primitive music may be considered as dance music. All primitive songs were accompanied by gestures or dances and, naturally, there was no dance without its acompanying music. The head-hunting Dyaks of Borneo have a dance in which the gestures indicate the cutting off of heads. The North American Indians have a scalp dance, celebrating the victorious exploits of a war

* Carl Engel: Introduction to the Study of National Music, Vol. I.

party. The Maoris of New Zealand have a war dance in which all thrust out their tongues at once, a gesture which may indicate contempt of the enemy.

One of the most curious of primitive dances is the Corroberie Dance of the natives of Australia. It is thus described by Carl Engel: 'Twenty or more men paint their naked dark bodies to represent skeletons, which they accomplish by drawing white lines across the body with pipe-clay to correspond with the ribs, and broader ones on the arms, legs, and the head. Thus prepared they perform the Corroberie at night before a fire. The spectators, placed at some distance from them, see only the white skeletons, which vanish and reappear whenever the dancers turn around. The wild and ghastly action of the skeletons is accompanied by vocal effusions and some rhythmical noise which a number of hidden bystanders produce by beating their shields in regular time.' Here is the melody of one of these Corroberie dances. This melody is from New South Wales and has been noted with slight variations by Wilkes, Field, and Freycinet. The version of Field is given:

But it is, perhaps, among the American Indians, of all savage peoples, that the dance assumes its greatest importance. The very term 'dance' often means a ceremony covering several days; the whole consisting of many individual dances, recitations, and songs, and forming a ritual of a quasi-religious or pantheistic character. Their ceremonies are usually appeals to

the gods for rain, abundant crops, luck in hunting, or good fortune in war. Thus there is the Great Rain Dance of the Junis; the Sun Dance of the Cheyennes; and the Snake Dance of the Hopis. The Snake Dance is an elaborate ceremony of several days' duration, during which live rattlesnakes are on occasion carried in the hands and even held between the teeth while a dignified and 'stamping' sort of dance goes forward. It is primarily an invocation to the gods for rain.

Two melodies used in the Snake Dance are here given, as noted by Benjamin Ives Gilman:

All primitive dances are accompanied by hand clapping, stamping of the feet, the beating of stones, the knocking of two sticks of wood together, or something of this nature to keep the time regular and to accentuate the rhythm. Among the Andamanese Islanders thigh-slapping alternates with hand-clapping, and among some tribes the snapping of the fingers is used. From snapping the fingers to rattling a handful of pebbles was an easy and natural step. This rattling of pebbles in the hand constituted a kind of rude 'castanets.' These pebbles were soon put into a sea shell or a gourd and thus the first rattles came into existence. Rattles were made by putting pebbles into gourds or other dried, hollow fruits, into tortoise shells, or sea-shells, and even into human skulls, as is the case in New Guinea. In the Snake Dance mentioned above

gourd rattles are used, imitating the sound of the rattlesnake when angry. The rattle is supposed to be the remote ancestor of the bell. In the place of two sticks, two bones were frequently beaten one upon the other, or struck together while being held between the fingers of one hand. Long mussel shells were also used as clappers. The beating of slabs or plates of stone constituted a rude gong. Finally it was discovered that by stretching the skin of an animal tightly over the end of a hollow log and striking it energetically a sharper and more resonant and penetrating noise could be produced than in any other way. Thus the first drums were made.

The rudest form of drum on record is evidently that in use among the Andamanese Islanders. It is called the *Pukuta Yemnga* and consists of a 'shield-shaped piece of wood which is placed with the narrow end in the ground and struck with the foot. The convex side of it follows the shape of the tree from which it has been cut. When in use the convex side of the Pukuta is uppermost' (Portman). It is evidently a kind of sounding board, or foot-drum.

The drum, roughly speaking, is the oldest musical instrument. It is of great interest to us inasmuch as it still holds a place of honor in the modern orchestra. It is the king of the group of percussion instruments whose object it is, not to produce a tone, but an accent.

No tribe of savages has been discovered but what is possessed of a drum of some sort. The most usual form of construction of the primitive drum has been that of a section of tree trunk, hollowed out, and covered with skin at each end. Certain trees, such as the bread-fruit tree or the bamboo, render this peculiarly feasible. But drums have been found made from gourds, cocoanuts, calabashes, and many melon-like fruits. Primitive drums range in size from very small hand drums, which can be held in one hand and struck with the

other, up to those whose heads are several feet in diameter and require the use of a good stout club as a drumstick.

The ancient Mexicans possessed a drum which gave forth two distinct tones of definite pitch. It is thus described by Carl Engel in his work on Musical Instruments: 'They [the Mexicans] generally made it of a single block of very hard wood, somewhat oblong square in shape, which they hollowed, leaving at each end a solid piece about three or four inches in thickness, and at its upper side a kind of sound-board about a quarter of an inch in thickness. In this sound-board, if it may be called so, they made three incisions, namely, two running parallel some distance lengthwise of the drum, and a third running across from one of these to the other just in the centre. By this means they obtained two vibrating tongues of wood which, when beaten with a stick, produced sounds as clearly defined as those of our kettledrums.' In some of these wooden drums the two tongues on being struck at the same time produced a third; in others a fifth; in others a sixth, and in some even an octave. The difference in pitch was obtained by making the two tongues of a different thickness, and naturally the greater the difference in thickness the larger was the interval produced.

A curious instance of drums which give forth a sound of a definite pitch is the bamboo drums, still to be found in some of the islands of the Pacific. These drums were first described in the account of Captain James Cook's third voyage to the Pacific ocean. The whole passage is of exceeding interest, giving as it does a picture of purely primitive musical development untouched and uninfluenced by any civilized suggestion. The date, as far as I have been able to ascertain, was May 18, 1777, and the place Hapace (Hapai) in the Tonga Island group. The account is as follows:

'A chorus of eighteen men seated themselves before us in the centre of the circle composed of numerous spectators, the area of which was to be the scene of the exhibitions. Four or five of this band had large pieces of bamboo, from three to five or six feet long, each managed by one man, who held it nearly in a vertical position, the upper end open, but the other end closed by one of the joints. With this closed end the performers kept constantly striking the ground, though slowly, thus producing different notes according to the different lengths of the instruments, but all of them of the hollow or bass sort; to counteract which a person kept striking quickly, and with two sticks, a piece of the same substance, split and laid along the ground, and by that means furnishing a tone as acute as those produced by the others were grave. The rest of the band, as well as those who performed upon the bamboos, sang a slow and soft air, which so much tempered the harsher notes of the above instruments that no bystander, however accustomed to hear the most perfect and varied modulations of sweet sounds, could avoid confessing the vast power and pleasing effect of this harmony.'

Captain James King, who was with Captain Cook during his last voyage, also writes concerning these bamboo drums as follows: 'In their regular concerts each man had a bamboo which was of a different length and gave a different tone. These they beat against the ground, and each performer, assisted by the note given by this instrument, repeated the same note, accompanying it with words, by which means it was rendered sometimes short and sometimes long. In this manner they sang in chorus, and not only produced octaves to each other, according to their species of voice, but fell on concords such as were not disagreeable to the ear.'

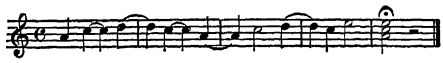
IV

The latter part of this quotation from Captain King raises the interesting question of the existence of harmony in primitive music. This question has been much discussed. Travellers have certainly brought back wonderful tales of part singing among primitive peoples. Unfortunately most of these travellers have not possessed any very accurate musical knowledge, hence their statements cannot for the most part be regarded as of scientific value. Especially does this apply to statements concerning harmony or the harmonic intervals. The appreciation of a melody or 'tune' is about as much as the man of average intelligence is capable of. But the determination of the relation of the notes of this tune to other sounds produced at the same time requires a more special or technical knowledge.

At a first consideration of the subject one is led, somewhat hastily, to conclude that when definite harmonic intervals occur in savage music they are entirely the result of accident, and not of design. In his description of a dance, native to the bushmen of Australia, Elson says: 'The music to this odd performance is *not* in unison; the dancer sings one air, the spectators another, and the drum gives a species of "ground bass" to the whole.' To have arranged these two 'airs' so that they, on being sung simultaneously, would have produced a concordant and musical result would have required a degree of mental development of which the bushman is not to be suspected. In this, and many similar instances, we may safely assume that such harmonic intervals as may have been produced were purely the result of accident. There are, however, so many instances on record, and of undoubted authenticity, in which it is seen that certain savages have consciously striven to produce concords, both in their singing and

in their rude instruments, that these cannot be disregarded in an impartial consideration of the question.

Of great interest in this connection is the following song, which was obtained by G. Forster at the Tonga Islands about the year 1775:



It will be seen that this song ends with a chord of three tones; a triad, in other words. It will also be seen that each of the tones in the triad (with the exception of e) has been sounded more than once in the preceding melody. In fact, with the exception of d, all the tones of the melody are constituent tones of the triad. After singing these tones in melodic sequence, or one *after* the other, it was surely a most natural procedure to sing them *at the same time*, so that they should sound together. Thus the triad was quite naturally produced. Drayton, who visited the Tonga Islands some seventy years after Forster, also mentions the fact of their ending some of their songs with a well-defined triad. But whereas the triad in the song noted by Forster is minor, that spoken of by Drayton is a major triad. In either case the fact is sufficiently remarkable.

In the narrative of the Wilkes exploring expedition we find a song noted in which use is made of the harmonic intervals in the accompaniment of a melody. The song was obtained at the Tonga Islands about 1840. In its use of harmony it is one degree in advance of the song collected by Forster, although not so interesting melodically:

At first the bass note makes a fifth with the principal melodic note. Later the third is added, making the complete major triad. It is also worth noting that these harmonic bass tones are in a slightly different rhythm from the melody and preserve an independent character as an accompaniment to the melody. Perhaps the most striking instance, however, of the conscious use by savages of concordant musical intervals is afforded by the following little song noted by the traveller Forster as having been sung by the original inhabitants of New Zealand:

To have sung this melody in thirds, to have ended it in unison, and then to have gone back to the thirds again was certainly a most remarkable feat for the savage mind to accomplish, and decidedly points to conscious intention rather than mere accident.

While the knowledge and the development of the science of harmony is one of the fruits of European civilization, and as a science is well-nigh confined to Europe exclusively, we still must admit that whereas primitive man had no knowledge of harmony he had a feeling for it, and that this feeling led him, though somewhat blindly, to the attainment of certain fundamental harmonic intervals. These intervals he evidently valued and used consciously. It is certainly of interest to note that a germ or suggestion of harmony existed in the primitive mind; that this element, as well as the other elements of music, has a natural basis.

V

We have seen how naturally the percussion instruments were developed; how they sprang into being, as it were, in response to an innate necessity for rhythmic

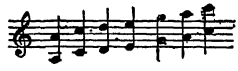
expression, an inevitable accompaniment of the dance and the dance-song. Almost at the same time wind instruments of a simple and rude kind were fashioned. Whistles were made from the bones of animals with the marrow removed. Pipes were made from hollow reeds, while conch shells and the horns of deer-like animals furnished the first trumpets. These primitive whistles, pipes, and deer-horn trumpets * when blown were capable of giving forth but one tone. However, it is highly probable that, as their makers grew more familiar with the effect of the varying pressure of the lips, certain partials of the fundamental tone were produced, such as the octave, the fifth, and even the third. Eventually a series of holes were pierced in them, thus making it possible by means of stopping and unstopping these holes with the fingers to produce a rude scale of tones. But the first whistles were evidently of the one tone variety. An interesting relic of this description has recently been exhumed by N. Lartet in the department of Dordogne, France. It consists of a small bone, probably of the reindeer, about two inches in length. Through this bone near one end a small hole has been bored, probably by a sharp piece of hard stone, like flint. By applying the lips to this hole and blowing strongly a shrill whistling sound is produced. This was no doubt used in hunting, or as a call. In a cave at Lombrive in the department of Ariège several dog-teeth with similar holes for whistling have likewise been discovered.

To construct an instrument of the whistle variety which should produce more than one tone was the next step. On whistles or pipes of different lengths tones of different pitches can be produced, low tones from long pipes, higher tones from shorter pipes. So different lengths of whistles were rudely bound together, the longest at one end, the shortest at the other

* Horns made from elephant tusks have been found in central Africa.

end, and the intermediate ones arranged in a sequence according to their relative lengths. Thus an instrument was made from which it was possible to obtain a succession of rising tones, a primitive scale. As with the drum among percussion instruments, so this instrument among wind instruments occupies a place of honor. The invention of the drum sums up for us all previously existing rhythmic musical impulses, and this collection of whistles gives us an instrument on which the production of a sequence of different tones or musical scale is possible. It has been given the poetical name of 'Pan's Pipes.' These 'Pan's Pipes,' of more or less primitive construction, are found quite generally among the savage tribes of the world. Specimens have been found in South America consisting of but two flutes or pipes, a kind of double flute, as it were; while specimens with a variable number of pipes, from six or seven up to fifteen, have been found among the inhabitants of the various islands of Polynesia. Stumpf, in *Die Anfänge der Musik,* reproduces a photograph taken in southwest Africa, showing an orchestra of Pan's Pipes. There are eleven performers, each holding a set of pipes. The instruments are of several sizes; the smallest being about six inches and the largest five or six feet in length. Archæological discoveries in the ancient tombs or burial places of barbarous or semi-civilized peoples bring many curious specimens to light. In the British museum there is a Pan's pipe consisting of a double row of reeds bound together exactly opposite each other; a sort of double Pan's Pipes. Each series consists of seven reed pipes, and while one series of pipes remains open, allowing the free passage of air through them, all the pipes of the second series have been closed at the lower end. Now, to stop a pipe at the bottom has the effect of raising its pitch an octave. It was evidently the intention that two of these pipes should be blown at once and when

this is done through the whole series the following succession of tones is produced:



This is a five-toned or pentatonic scale, the last two tones being merely duplicates in octave of the first two. The scale of five tones, arranged in varying sequence, is a primitive form of scale. While not so primitive as some (scales of three or four tones, for instance), it is still much more so than the scales on which our modern art of music is based.

Another specimen of ancient Peruvian 'Pan's Pipes,' at present in the New York Museum of Natural History, gives the following scale:

This is a scale of eight tones and bears some slight relation to the minor scale in use at the present day.

Among the Tahitians Captain Cook observed that the raising or lowering of the pitch of a single flute or pipe was accomplished by rolling up a leaf in tubular form, inserting this improvised tube into the bottom of the flute and pushing it in or drawing it out until the required pitch was obtained. Some such device as this quite probably suggested the obtaining of different tones from the same pipe. The rolled-up leaf itself was used as a pipe capable of giving forth a true musical tone.

One of the natives of the Sandwich Islands, on being questioned in regard to their primitive musical instruments, stripped a leaf from the *ti* plant and, rolling it up somewhat in the shape of an old-fashioned lamplighter, blew through it, producing a tone of pure reed-like quality. Emerson says: 'This little rustic pipe,

quickly improvised from the leaf that every Hawaiian garden supplies, would at once convert any skeptic to a belief in the pipes of the god Pan.*

Among the inhabitants of New Guinea a flute or pipe is in use in which the tones are varied by means of a slide which is pushed into the tube or withdrawn in much the same manner as the rolled-up leaf mentioned by Captain Cook, but evidently on a much more extensive scale. This is in effect a primitive trombone.

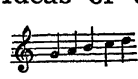
Finally, flutes or pipes which are pierced with holes are found among many savage tribes, who have discovered that the effect of lengthening or shortening the tube could be obtained by boring holes in it and stopping them or unstopping them with the fingers. Simple as this may appear to us, it was a great discovery for the savage mind to make, and must have been the culmination of many groping attempts to attain this end extending through long ages.

On the most primitive instruments of this nature the finger holes were but two or three in number, but flutes or pipes are now found among nearly all savages capable of giving scales of from five to eight tones. Fétis figures and describes an instrument made from the horn of a stag, which was found in an ancient sepulchre, near Poitiers, France. This instrument, which is a sort of trumpet or *flute-à-bec*,† is pierced with three holes and gives a series of four diatonic tones. The lowest with all the holes stopped; the next higher with one finger raised, and so on. It is described as being made with great care and precision, the holes having been placed with an exactitude which would seem to indicate a considerable knowledge and appreciation of certain facts of acoustics.

In the sepulchre where this instrument was found

* Nath. B. Emerson: The Unwritten Literature of Hawaii, 1909.

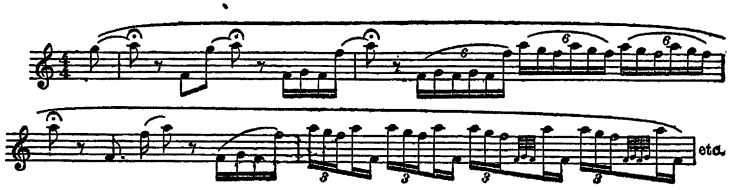
† *Flute-à-bec* = beak flute; one which is played by blowing through the end.

there were arms and other implements made of stone. This musical instrument, therefore, almost surely dates from the later period of the stone age, which age preceded in point of time the age in which man discovered and made use of the metals. It is therefore prehistoric and undoubtedly of very great antiquity. In the New York Museum of Natural History there is a collection of ancient bone flutes from Peru. These flutes are pierced with finger holes and give various scales of four, five, and six tones. The four-toned scale sounds entirely rational and is in accordance with our modern ideas of diatonic succession; also this five-toned scale  and this six-toned scale . But certain other scales given by these flutes appear to be more or less freakish in character and consist of a somewhat hit-or-miss collection of tones, indicating either a very crude musical sense among the ancient Peruvians, or very little skill on the part of the makers of the flutes:

A 'cane' flute in the collection gives this scale:

Nose flutes are found at the present day among many tribes. These are made from a section of bamboo or other cane-like wood from which the pith has been removed. The top end is left closed by the joint and a hole pierced on the side very near the top. Finger holes from two to four in number are bored in the tube of the flute. In playing the flute is pressed firmly against the lips, taking care that the little hole near the top end is covered by one nostril. Music of an ex-

tempore kind is now produced by breathing into the instrument and covering and uncovering the finger holes in the usual manner; the length of the piece of music being determined by the breath of the performer. The following specimen of nose-flute music was collected by Miss Jennie Elsner in Hawaii:



The development of these primitive wind instruments is usually ascribed to a slightly later period than that of the development of the first percussion instruments. The construction of wind instruments is considered to represent a slightly higher degree of mental development in man, and hence they are not regarded by ethnologists as being so primitive as the percussion instruments. Nevertheless Wallaschek insists that the first instruments to be developed were wind instruments, alleging in proof the discovery of some Egyptian flutes which he asserts antedate any other musical instruments of which we have any record. It is certainly true that the physical organism of man contains in itself the prototype of all wind instruments, i. e., the voice. But it is equally true that hand clapping and the stamping of the feet are also native to him, and these are undoubtedly the prototypes of all percussion instruments. The isolated fact of the discovery of these flutes is not of sufficient weight, to our mind, to justify the belief that wind instruments were developed anterior to percussion instruments.

As the appreciation of the fact of definite musical tones being obtainable on instruments took root and grew in the human mind, and especially as these tones

began to be arranged in definite series or scales, another instrument of a remarkable nature was developed. It was a percussion instrument, but one on which could be produced not only a tone having a definite pitch, but a whole series or scale of tones. Hence it was as capable of reproducing a melody as some of the primitive pipes or flutes. This was the xylophone. This instrument, having its far distant origin in the two sticks of wood which were struck together to produce a rhythmical noise by the most primitive savages, has been brought to its greatest perfection by the Africans and the Guatemalans. Its principle of construction is similar to that of the Pan's Pipes; a series of sticks or bars of wood arranged according to their relative lengths; the longer giving forth the lower tones, and the tones growing higher in pitch as the sticks grow shorter. The series of sounding sticks of wood are in Africa usually fixed over a gourd, a series of gourds, or a drum-like instrument which acts as a sounding-board, thus giving the pieces of wood greater sonority. This instrument, as it is found among many of the African tribes, has a compass of from one to two octaves and gives approximately the tones of our usual diatonic scale. It aroused the admiration of Junod to such an extent that he refers to it as the 'African piano,' not an inapt name, by the way. The *marimba* of the Guatemalans, while not exactly a xylophone, is a percussion instrument which is capable of giving a scale of definite tones. According to Wallaschek 'it consists of a number of gourds (as many as sixteen) covered with a flat piece of wood, beaten with a stick, and produces different tones acording to the size of the gourd.' The tone is said to resemble very much that of our modern piano.

The development of drums, such elementary wind instruments as have been noted, the xylophone, a suggestion of harmony and the rude idea of a scale, make

up the sum of the musical accomplishment of primitive man. It is true that the precursor of the stringed instruments is to be found in the hunting bow, and a few cases are found where this is used as a sort of one-stringed harp, the string being either struck with a stick or plucked with the fingers. Mention must also be made of the African *goura,* a sort of a primitive Æolian harp. It has but one string, and is similar in shape to the child's small bow for shooting arrows. It has a quill affixed to one end in such a way that the string may be vibrated by blowing through the quill. The fingers are then lightly touched to the string, and a few faint harmonic-like sounds are produced. But, generally speaking, the development of stringed instruments is not to be looked for among savage peoples, it coincides with the rise of man from barbarism to some degree of civilization.

VI

It is impossible to trace the progress of music in unbroken sequence from its primitive beginnings to its development as an art by civilized nations. The record is far too fragmentary. There are too many missing links, too many isolated and well-nigh inexplicable facts. Thus, among semi-civilized peoples like the Malays, the Bedouins, and the people of Africa, we find music of a comparatively high order and sophisticated nature. It is inconceivable that these people should have developed this music by their own initiative. The only reasonable explanation is that it has been acquired to a certain extent from educated travellers and explorers. In this process it has been unconsciously modified so that it usually reflects both elements—the barbaric and the civilized. The following melody, which is a song in use by the 'medicine men' of southeastern Africa for the exercising or ex-

pelling of an evil spirit from a person supposed to be possessed by it, is a case in point:

While this melody has an undoubted barbaric character as a whole, it shows traces of civilized influence. It is quite definitely in the key of G, even though it contains no F-sharp, and the passages for chorus sound anything but barbaric. From the same district comes the following war song. While structurally, especially in regard to the use of the musical intervals, it exhibits considerable musical sophistication, the general effect is wild and primitive. This war song was in actual use in 1895.

Among many of the semi-civilized tribes of Africa harps are found to be in use, some having as many as sixteen strings. The oboe, an instrument of a much higher type than the primitive pipe, is also found. It is conjectured that the Africans derived the harp from ancient Egypt, as many of those in use at the present day much resemble in form certain harps which we find represented in ancient Egyptian sculptures and bas reliefs. As for the oboe, it was almost certainly introduced by Arabian traders.

Among several tribes, but particularly the Ashantees, is to be found a rude sort of stringed instrument which in construction is somewhat midway between a harp and a banjo, and has some of the characteristics of each. It is called a *sanko*. It has eight strings, the

lowest of which is tuned to middle 'C' and the highest an octave above. The intermediary strings fairly represent the tones of the usual diatonic scale. The origin of the *sanko* is known to be Arabian, but its construction has undoubtedly undergone some modification in the hands of the Africans. It is capable of giving forth incipient harmony, and its negro players make frequent use of thirds, sixths and even chords of three tones (triads). Here are two specimens of music played upon the *sanko,* both collected and transcribed by T. E. Bowdich in Ashantee:

The first of these tunes is claimed by the natives of Ashantee to be their oldest traditional tune. It certainly seems to possess all the crudity of true primitive music. The second tune is far more highly and rationally organized and shows more decidedly the effect of external influence. Quite free from the possible modification of European imitation, however, are the following fragments, recently taken down on the phonograph by Sir Harry Johnston in Uganda. It is to be regretted that the notation is not more exact.*

* We have ventured to change certain notes, such as substituting D-flat for C-sharp, for instance. While this in no way alters the tune, the musical intervals are more readily grasped by the reader.

Algernon Rose has described a peculiar kind of xylophone which he saw in South Africa. It consists of a series of ten or more pieces of bamboo of different lengths. All are fastened tightly at one end to a board, leaving the other end free. This other end is plucked with the thumb or fingers, after the manner of a harp string. The pieces of bamboo being plucked in this manner, each gives forth a sound, and as they are of different lengths it is possible to produce a series of different sounds; a rudimentary musical scale. Rose refers to the instrument as a 'clicker' and finds it to be in use among the Kaffirs. T. E. Bowdich also mentions an instrument which seems to be, from his description, almost identical with the instrument described above. This he found to be in use in Ashantee before 1819. He gives the following air as having been played upon it:

This certainly sounds quite natural to civilized ears. Bowdich also mentions a one-stringed instrument called the *bentwa,* which seems to have been played much in the manner of a jew's-harp. He says:

'The Bentwa is a stick bent in the form of a bow, and across it is fastened a very thin piece of split cane which is held between the lips at one end and struck

with a small stick, while at the other it is occasionally stopped, or rather buffed by a thick one; on this they play only lively airs, and it owes its various sounds to the lips.' He also gives this tune as having been played upon this instrument. Its resemblance to certain Irish jigs in 6/8 time is worthy of remark.

There also exists among one of the lesser known tribes (the Empoongua) an instrument having five strings, said to be made of the filaments of the palm tree. Bowdich describes this instrument as being made of pieces of bamboo, which being bound together form a species of sounding board over which the strings are stretched lengthwise and held up by means of bridges at the ends. He gives the following tune as having been played on this instrument:

While the study of some of the musical instruments of semi-civilized peoples is of ethnological interest the music itself is questionably so, inasmuch as it is more or less of a jumble of two elements—the barbaric and the civilized. Hence it is not of real significance in tracing the natural rise and evolution of the art. Much of the music of semi-barbarous peoples does not consist of what they have themselves developed during their rise from savagery, but consists more frequently of diluted, distorted and malappropriated bits of melody which have by devious routes reached them from civilization.

VII

Of especial interest to Americans is the music of the North American Indians. It is difficult to characterize this music by a few general remarks, as there are, or rather were, over fifty different tribes, each of which had its own peculiar music. The whole mass of tunes presented many interesting varieties, both in structure and rhythm.

Music among the Indians did not occupy the place of an art. Song was not indulged in for the sake of giving pleasure, and music can hardly be said to have been developed among them in response to a love of melody for its own sake. There can be no doubt that among the Africans and other semi-barbarous peoples music, however rude, gives a genuine æsthetic pleasure, even though of a primitive sort. But among the Indians music was too closely bound up with ritual to have much of an independent existence as music. Song was the inevitable accompaniment of every important act or ceremony in tribal or individual life. Each prayer, incantation, tribal or individual ceremony had its own appropriate song, and it was considered unlawful to sing this particular song except in accompaniment of this particular prayer or ceremony. Certain songs having to do with ceremonies which occurred at certain seasons of the year could only be heard at these seasons. The song, as a song, had no existence apart from the ceremony. It is true that gambling songs, and songs of labor, such as corn-grinding songs, are to be found among many of the tribes, but these are apparently variations of the general rule, and that they were indulged in for the sake of æsthetic pleasure is very doubtful. Between certain tribes on the Pacific coast there were indeed singing contests, but it is learned on investigation that these contests were largely trials of

memory, their object being to ascertain who could remember accurately the greatest number of songs.

In general it may be said that the melodies of the northern tribes, such as the 'Iroquois,' 'Algonquin,' or 'Kwakiutl,' are much ruder and present more rugged characteristics than those of the southern tribes, such as the 'Zunis' or 'Navahoes.' These southern Indian melodies are much more graceful. This difference is well shown by the two following melodies. The first is from Dakota; the second from New Mexico:

A peculiarity of the Dakota melody is the downward leap of a fourth to be seen in the second measure. The use of the interval of the fourth as a prominent melodic interval is quite a general characteristic of Indian music, and is noticeable in the music of many different tribes. The following Scalp Dance from Minnesota illustrates this:

Again, it may be said that the larger number of Indian tunes have a falling melodic inflection. True to the most primitive characteristic of savage music, that of beginning on a high tone and descending gradu-

ally to the bottom of the voice, the melodic course of the great majority of Indian tunes is ever downward. It is not an unusual thing for an Indian tune to end on a tone an octave and a half lower than that on which it began. The following dance song, also from Minnesota, illustrates this:

Among the Indians the drum is naturally the instrument most frequently in use. There are but few songs or ceremonies in which it does not play a vital part. It is almost always used to accompany a singer, apparently to mark the time; but curiously enough the rhythm of the drum is sometimes at variance with the rhythm of the song. The rhythmic values of the vocal melody, on the one hand, and the different rhythm of its drum accompaniment, on the other, are so persistently independent that the effect is very evidently intentional. Rattles are sometimes used instead of the drum, as is the case in the Snake Dances of the Hopis already referred to.

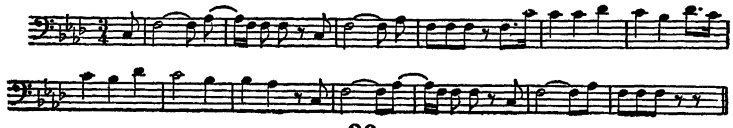
The only other musical instrument deserving the name which is in widespread use is the so-called flute. This flute, pierced with six holes and blown through the end (not across the side) is used as a courting or love-making instrument on which to serenade the loved one. The fragments of melody which are played upon

it are largely extempore and are understood by the Indian maiden as a declaration of love. The following is a sample of one of these flute love-calls:

With the exception of the flute and its love-calls, instrumental music can be said not to exist among the Indians. With them music is almost entirely song. And, as the most important element of their songs is not primarily their strictly musical value, this paucity of their instrumental music is only what might be expected. It is interesting to note, however, that practically in the only case in which music occurs divorced from ritual in Indian life, it appears as an expression of the love emotion. This is significant when considered in connection with Darwin's theory of the origin of music cited above.

Even though the music of the Indians is almost entirely a by-product of ritual it would be wrong to conclude that *as music* it is lacking in character. While many of their ritualistic songs are merely a sort of recitative in which the melody is much distorted and drawn out to accommodate the words, others are quite perfect in their form and general melodic organization, and of a truly distinctive and forceful character; as, for instance, the following 'Song of the Wolf,' which was collected by Dr. Boas among the Kwakiutl tribe in the northwest:

SONG OF THE WOLF



Nothing like a scientific study of Indian music was attempted until 1880. In that year Theodore Baker lived a while on the Seneca reservation, in the state of New York, and collected and studied such Indian melodies as he could there obtain. The results of his studies were embodied in a pamphlet and published under the title, *Über die Musik der nordamerikanischen Wilden.* This little book first drew the attention of ethnologists and others to the hitherto unsuspected existence of a large and important native musical culture among the Indians. Before 1880 investigators of the Indian and his native culture had entirely ignored his music, considering it to be mere barbaric noise not worthy of attention. Even Schoolcraft, in his great work published in 1854, said: 'Indian music is very simple. It consists of about four notes.' Since the publication of Baker's essay, however, the subject has not lacked investigators. The application by Prof. Fewkes, of Harvard University, of the phonograph to the accurate recording of Indian melody has been used with brilliant success by investigators. Through the efforts of such workers as Alice C. Fletcher, Frederick R. Burton, Franz Boaz, James Mooney, Natalie Curtis, Frances Densmore, and others, thousands of Indian songs of many different kinds have been collected, written down, and published, forming a library of American primitive music of great completeness and inestimable value to students of the subject.

VIII

In collecting and studying the music of primitive peoples great difficulty is experienced in obtaining trustworthy data. Almost all the savage and semi-barbarous peoples of the world at the present day have been in contact more or less with civilized man for so long that they have acquired by imitation many of his

manners, customs, and ideas. Thus the savage's original development has been overlaid as it were with a varnish of culture, which is foreign, not native, to him. The first civilized men to come in contact with a savage tribe have not as a rule been intent upon observing their manners and customs nor upon recording their primitive music or folk-lore. These first men have usually come as discoverers and as conquerors. They have been followed by missionaries, who in their zeal to perpetuate the doctrines of Christianity have been ever anxious to divert the minds of the people from their ancient traditions, by sustituting for them stories from Bible history. Their ancient songs and barbarous-sounding incantations, however interesting to the ethnologist, have been in most cases tabooed by the missionaries as impious, who substituted for them the hymns of the church. This thing has happened in Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, Africa, and particularly in America, the Indian tribes having been so inoculated with musical ideas, hymns, and scraps of folk song, that it is frequently only with great difficulty that the character of their own primitive music can be determined.

A collection of the music of the Hopi tribe, who dwell in seven naturally fortified hill towns in the desert of Arizona, reveals to a large extent Spanish influence. Many of their melodies have the grace and movement of Spanish dances. This is quite explicable, however, when it is remembered that the Spanish held dominion over these towns from 1580 to 1680. Spanish influence is also apparent in the music of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Philippine Islands, and in the traditional music of the Mexicans and Peruvians. Brasseur de Bourbourg has translated into French from the Quinche, the former Mayan tongue, an ancient manuscript called 'Rabinal-Achi.' It is an immense dramatic ballet accompanied by music and danced and acted by

hundreds of performers. But when we come to examine this music it is only to find that it has an unmistakably Spanish character.

From the fascinating histories of Francis Parkman it is plainly seen with what zeal the early Jesuit missionaries strove to Christianize the Canadian tribes of Indians. At the present day it is not an unusual thing to find turns of melody and even whole tunes which resemble to a large extent certain hymns of the Catholic Church. Frederick R. Burton, who has investigated the Ojibways' music, says that, while on one of his trips in the vicinity of Lake Huron, he fell in with a particularly isolated tribe of these Indians. He asked them to sing one of their *old* choruses. The Indians complied and—sang a garbled version of 'Old Hundred.'

The innate love of music among the African blacks has been remarked. Their imitative powers are likewise well known. We are told by Theophilus Hahn of an instance in which not only the music but the words of certain Dutch hymns, the latter being entirely unintelligible to the negroes, were remembered and repeated almost exactly, after being heard but once by them. Noirot,* after calling attention to the great resemblance existing between certain African airs and English jig tunes, or French vaudeville songs, says: 'It is necessary, however, to make an exception of those slow and monotonous phrases which are sung by the young women to accompany dancing, and of the airs played on the Bambara flute. In these we again perceive the savage aspect of this music; the chant inspired by the patriarchal life of the blacks.' A specimen of one of these airs is here given:

* *A travers le Fouta-Diallon et le Bambouc.*

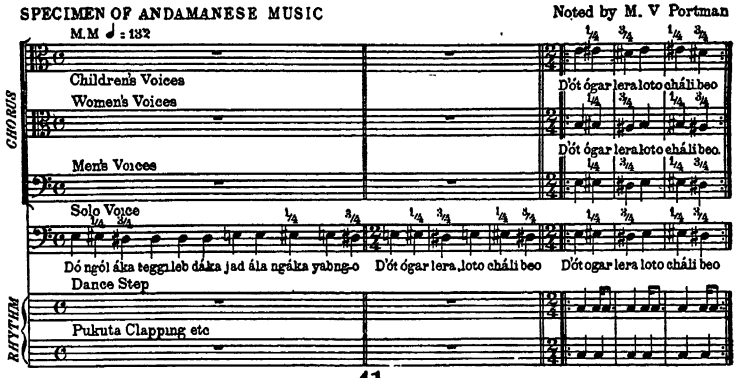
The first collectors of the music of the various savage tribes naturally were obliged to write it down in ordinary musical notation. But savages in their primitive melodies, like certain animals in their quasi-musical cries, continually use intervals of less than a semitone. In writing down these primitive melodies in our notation it has been necessary to disregard these small intervals and to treat them as accidental happenings, a mere out-of-tuneness, as it were. The note written down has always been assumed to represent the tone which the primitive singer was trying unsuccessfully to produce. But instances of these variations from the tones of the orthodox chromatic scale finally became so numerous as to give rise to the belief that savages consciously made use of quarter tones in their songs. This belief has had many learned and eloquent defenders, among whom may be mentioned James A. Davies * and Benjamin Ives Gilman.† The truth of this theory is, however, very doubtful. The conscious use of the quarter tones or intervals smaller than those in use in European music would indicate a much more refined perception of tones and their relations, a much more delicate musical ear, than is possessed by civilized Europeans. And this is hardly to be reasonably expected of savages. Moreover, during recent years the writer has examined some hundreds of Indian songs as recorded by the phonograph. Many repetitions of single songs have been examined by him. As a general rule the repetitions fail to agree in length, rhythm, or accuracy of intonation. Frequently they agree only in general contour. Any single tone is liable to vary up or down at least a quarter of a tone, and in some cases the variation is as much as a full tone. Now if the Indians consciously use quarter tones in their songs, one would expect to find a regular recur-

* See Sir George Gray: Polynesian Mythology.
† See 'Hopi Songs.'

rence of these small intervals at the same place in each subsequent repetition of the song. But as such is very far from being the case, one is led to conclude that while these fractional intervals do really occur, their occurrence is much more the result of accident than of conscious intention. These conclusions in regard to North American Indian music apply, we believe, to the music of all savages.

The characteristics of that which is primitive are undoubted strength, directness of expression, and consequent effectiveness, but this elemental strength is coupled with crudity, inaccuracy, and an apparent lawlessness or impatience of restraint. No matter how charming, how effective, or how interesting many of these strains of primitive music may seem to us from an ethnological point of view, it is apparent that the *mind* of man has not yet grasped and moulded this tonal material. Primitive music does not show the effect of thought. It is merely the wild and wayward expression of emotion.

It was when the rudimentary successions of tones known to primitive man were gathered up and scientifically arranged in definite and unalterable scales that our modern art of music began. And at this point our survey of primitive music properly ends. H. F. G.



CHAPTER II

EXOTIC MUSIC *

Significance of exotic music—Classification; Aztecs and Peruvians—The Orient: China and Hindustan, the Mohammedans—Exotic instruments—Music as religious rite; music and dancing—Music and customs; Orient and Occident.

No history of music can pretend to completeness that does not give some account of the various musical systems that have developed before or outside of the influence of European civilization, though in truth music, in comparison with the other arts in Europe, has assimilated astonishingly little from the peoples of the Orient or from ancient civilization, for European music is based essentially upon harmony, and harmony, taking the word in its accepted meaning, was unknown to ancient nations, and is unknown to-day in countries of the Orient. We must admit that tricks of rhythm and melody came from the Orient into Spain at the time of the Moorish Conquest, were even brought back to Europe by the Crusaders returning from their distant wanderings. Furthermore the lute and perhaps the violin, both of which have held an important place in the development of European music, came from Arabia. But that the technique or structure of our music has been considerably influenced by the music of other races is quite out of the question. On the other hand, composers have, from time to time, enlivened their music by touches of Oriental color. They have experimented with Oriental melody and rhythm, they

* Musical development of civilized races removed from European influence.

have sometimes used strange instruments foreign to Europe. We may cite, for instance, Goldmark's *Sakuntala Overture;* Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de Perles;* Félicien David's symphonic ode, *Le Désert;* Rimsky-Korsakov's glowing Oriental *Scheherezade;* Balakirev's *Islamey,* etc. These experiments cannot but call our attention to those elaborate exotic systems of music which were flourishing in India, in China, in Japan, in Siam and Java, in Arabia and Persia centuries before the age of Bach and Handel. While Europe was still slowly emerging from the barbarism of the Middle Ages music had reached a high state of development in these countries. Strange instruments of many kinds were in use; there was an art of composition, frequently some form of notation; there was a musical profession and 'much discussion of musical acoustics and æsthetics.' An authority * on musical ethnology says of the Arabs: 'At this day, when the decadence of the Arab civilization has been entirely consummated it still retains enough traces of its former splendor to enable us to claim without fear that at the time of its greatest florescence it was certainly as rich, probably even richer, than European art at the same epoch.'

I

As a foundation for all understanding and estimation of the so-called exotic systems of music we must bear in mind that beneath the differences from our own music in scale structure often as a matter of practice more apparent than real, in lack of harmony and in predominance of rhythm, lies the fundamental difference that music has never been cultivated for itself alone in China, in Hindustan, or among ancient nations

* Julien Tiersot: *Notes d'ethnographie musicale* (première séries), Paris, 1905.

to anything like the same extent as in the Occident. Though in the Mohammedan Orient, at the height of the Saracen civilization, it was highly esteemed as a social diversion, in general it figures, not as an independent art, but rather as an auxiliary one. This, of course, applies to art-music, not to popular or folk song, of which, just as in other lands, there is a rich literature in the East. On the rivers of China, in the bazaars of Hindoo cities, under the Bedouin tent-roof, the people sing their songs. But the art of music was developed by these peoples only in connection with dancing, sacred or secular, with ceremonial functions, plays or pantomimes. If this fact be borne in mind, it is perhaps easier to comprehend an art so strikingly different from our own.

Exotic music, or, broadly speaking, the music of the semi-civilized races, may be considered under four heads; that of the Aztecs and Peruvians (nations whose civilizations, though they have been destroyed, are of too recent date to be classed with those of the ancients, yet the scant musical record of which should not be overlooked); the music of India; the music of the Chinese, Japanese, and Indo-Chinese peoples, including the Siamese, Javese, Cambodians, Annamites; and the music of the Mohammedan Orient.

There is but little known of the music of the Aztecs or Peruvians. The fact that the Aztec language was sweet and harmonious to the ear and had no sharp or nasal sounds justified the fondness with which both lyric and dramatic poetry were cultivated in ancient Mexico. But the music of the Aztecs seems to have been unworthy of so cultivated a people. It was the only art that remained in its infancy among them. Still, the mention of ballads sung by the people, court-odes and the chants of temple choirs, show that they must have cultivated a form of vocal music distinctly above that of drums and horns, pipes and whistles. Moreover,

music played an important part in connection with religious and secular dancing, as it did also in India. It has been conjectured that the Aztec tonal system resembled that of the Arabs. Their songs generally began with deep sounds, rising in pitch and accelerating with the increase of pleasurable emotion on the part of the singer. De Solis speaks of the funeral processions in which the bodies of the dead were brought to the temples to be received by the priests swinging their censers of burning copal 'to the hoarse sound of dissonant flutes and singing various hymns in a melancholy mode.'

Among the Peruvians the beautiful Quichua dialect, like the melodious language of the Aztecs, encouraged the *haravecs* or poets to compose the verses which were sung at religious festivals and at the table of the Inca. And, as in Mexico, music was intimately associated with religious dancing and ceremony. It played its part in the elaborate ritual of the Incas' sun worship. However, little information is available concerning the development of the Inca music or that of the Aztecs before the Conquest. The Quichua and Aimara Indians of the present day are still passionately fond of music, singing and dancing to the accompaniment of the *quena* (Peruvian flute) and guitar; and phrases of the traditional minstrelsy of the Inca haravecs may 'have been borne down the tide of rustic melody to these later generations.' Their songs are in the ancient five-tone scale known as the pentatonic, which they have probably inherited from their proud ancestors, together with a fondness for triple rhythm, sole traces of the music of that brilliant state which sank before the power of Spain.

Concerning the music of China, of Hindustan, and of the Mohammedan Orient we have definite information. The people of these countries have not been, like the Aztecs of Mexico or the Incas of Peru, either swept

from the face of the earth or thrown back into a drowsy barbarism. Their own civilizations live on beneath a surface decay. They have ideals of tradition, of permanence, of racial habit, quite different from those accepted by our standards of progress and original development, which have fenced in their music from all Occidental influences. Only a few hardly noticeable variations in instrumentation and choreography mark the touch of time. Notation, rhythm, and design have remained for ages immutably the same.

It is supposed in China that Ling-Lenu, minister of the Emperor Honang-Ty, chosen to fix the laws of musical sound, retired to a bamboo-grove, near the source of the Yellow River, and there cut twelve bamboo tubes whose varying lengths yielded the sounds of our present-day chromatic scale. In reality, however, the pentatonic scale is used. The tones b and e (omitted in this scale as we have written it), the fourth and seventh tones in our scale, which are not found in the normal pentatonic scale, are given a special name, *pien;* and the union of the five tones and the two *pien* constitute what the Chinese call the 'Seven Principles' in music. But the five-tone scale is the one commonly employed in practice and constitutes the basis of all music in the Indo-Chinese countries.* In Java, Siam, Burmah, and Cambodia, both five-tone and seven-tone (heptatonic) scales are in use;

* What we may call modern Chinese music probably reached China through Bactria, a Greek kingdom, founded by Diodotus 256 B. C. Jesuit missionaries jumped to the conclusion that the Greeks borrowed the Pythagorean scale from the Chinese, but the 'Chinese' scale did not exist in China until two centuries after its appearance in Greece. Chinese literature on music goes back no farther than the ninth century of the Christian era, to which date may be assigned the Chieh Ku Lu, a treatise on the deerskin drum, introduced into China from Central Asia, and evidently of Scythian origin. There are several important works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in which the history and theory of music are fully discussed.

but the musical system of Japan, which was originally borrowed from China, is built up wholly on a five-tone scale, with the important difference from the Chinese that it has a minor third, and not a major:

This difference gives Japanese music a certain individual character of its own.

The Hindoos have a system of seven-toned scales differentiated from each other by variable quarter-tone steps. But the theory of music is developed in India with an over-elaboration of subtleties, as it is in China, and of almost a thousand varieties of scale theoretically possible in the Hindoo system no more than twenty are in actual use. Many of these resemble our own.

What may be called Mohammedan music is a complex type. It has resulted from the spread of Mohammedanism along the Mediterranean coast and Northern Africa, and in Central Africa and Southern Asia. It includes features from many sources—Persian, Byzantine Greek, Mediæval Christian, and purely local—and is historically a puzzle. Like the Hindoo scales, the scales which are used in distinctly Mohammedan countries are heptatonic; but the theoretical division of the octave is into seventeen steps (each equal to about one-third of a whole step) instead of the twenty-two *srutis* of the Hindoos. There are some eighteen of these seven-tone scales in use, varying from each other in the location of their shorter steps.

The five and seven-tone scales on which these musical systems are based are analogous to our own. It is the manner in which they are employed and modified by other factors that makes their music strikingly different from ours. The Chinese, in the first place, have many melodies similar to old Scotch songs, but they are

primarily interested, not in the flow of the melody, but in *timbre,* in the quality and character of sound. Whereas we, as soon as we have defined a sound, pass to the consideration of intonation, duration, etc., the Chinese theoreticians, with rare keenness of perception, have worked out an elaborate division of the quality of sound, according to the phenomena governing its production, classifying it according to eight sound-producing materials provided by Nature—skin, tone, metal, baked clay, silk, wood, bamboo, and gourd. Harmony means to the Chinese what it meant to the ancient Greeks, a purely æsthetic combination of sound and dance. Duple rhythm predominates. Both Chinese melodies and the melodies of the Indo-Chinese are continuous, admitting neither interruption nor repetition. The refrain is very rare, and occurs only in popular songs. Noisy, shrill, and harsh effects abound, disagreeable to our ears. Berlioz said: 'The Chinese sing like dogs howling, like a cat screeching when it has swallowed a toad.' But Berlioz could not listen with an understanding ear. No more can we. Such wholesale condemnation must be tempered with respect before the feeling of the illustrious Chinese musician, Konai, who said, 'When I strike the sonorous stones, either softly or with force, savage beasts leap up with joy and concord reigns between high dignitaries.'

In ancient China music was a privileged amusement of the higher classes, and it has always been under imperial supervision. With the passing of the centuries it has been largely turned over to the vulgar, in street and theatre; and the ancient rules governing its production and performance (there are sixty volumes of classic works alone on the subject) have fallen into disuse. A letter notation is still employed.

The music of Indo-China hardly differs in essentials from that of China, and presents much the same peculiarity in comparison with our own. On the other

hand, the music of India is quite distinct, and presents only a few surface similarities to the Mongolian. Hindoo music, according to Captain Day,* has lost the primitive purity of Aryan times. The theoretical division of the octave into twenty-two quarter-tones, recorded in Sanscrit books, finds no practical application in modern usage. As in Chinese music, harmony is nonexistent; for Hindoo music is purely melodic, and the *Vina,* the seven-stringed lute used as an accompanying instrument, merely doubles the voice part. But Hindoo music is built, as we have said, upon a system of seven-tone or heptatonic scales which offers far greater opportunity for effect than the pentatonic system of the Chinese. It has, moreover, infinitely more rhythmic variety and its rhythms are triple rather than duple, as is the case with the Chinese. They are capricious and elastic (this due, in part no doubt, to Mohammedan influences), and are usually strongly marked. One of the most characteristic features in Hindoo music, which has no counterpart in Chinese, is the *Raga,*† or traditional type-melody to which texts of varying character are sung. Some of the *ragas* are especially consecrated to gods and heroes. In general Hindoo airs are marked by long melodic passages, often of no definite design. There are three general divisions: *gana* (vocal music), *vadya* (instrumental music), and *nytria* (dance music). The Hindoos divide all instruments into four classes: quite unlike the Chinese classification: stringed instruments; those with membranes sounded by percussion; those struck in pairs; and those which sound when blown. A Sanscrit notation (characters for notes and signs or words for other details) indicates pitch and duration.

* C. R. Day: 'The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and the Deccan,' London, 1891.

† The music of a *raga,* which is very popular in Central India, is given in Tiersot, *Notes d'ethnographie musicale,* Plate 10.

Music in Mohammedan countries has peculiarities which differentiate it quite distinctly from music in China and in India. In India music has always been largely associated with religion, especially in connection with the dance. Mohammedanism has never encouraged religious music. It is true that the chanting of the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer from the minarets; but except this the music which accompanies the dances of the whirling dervishes of Cairo, Bagdad, and Constantinople offers practically the only example of Mohammedan religious music.* Nevertheless in the brilliant days of the Abbaside caliphs and the Moorish kings of Spain music was a passion with the Saracens. Haroun-al-Raschid lavished rewards of gold and lands on his musicians and the 'Thousand and One Nights' proves in what esteem music was held throughout the Mohammedan Orient at the time of the Caliphate. There was a rich and elaborate musical literature, but the decadence of the Arab civilization brought with it entire oblivion of the many treatises and writings of these glorious days. The old science is forgotten, just as in China the musical wisdom of ancient times has fallen into neglect. Yet throughout the wide territories in which Mohammedanism established itself, that peculiar and distinctive type which more than any other represents Oriental music to us, a type resulting from a mixture of Persian and Arabian styles, complicated with Christian and other influences, has been traditionally handed down to the present day. As in the other systems we have discussed, harmony is practically non-existent. The scales are seven-toned and there are some eighteen theoretical modes. Both duple and triple rhythms are employed with greatest variety. In fact, one of the most striking characteris-

* This finds a curious parallel in the music of the dance of the *seis* in the Cathedral of Seville—almost the only example of religious dancing in Christianity.

tics of Mohammedan musical art is the variety and complexity of its sharp rhythms. The melodies are excessively adorned with every sort of flourish and ornament, slides, turns, grace-notes, shakes, and arabesques of every description not pleasing to our ears. Popular songs and professional musicians are to be found throughout all the Mohammedan Orient. The love song in particular is held in high esteem in all Mohammedan countries, and the following example may illustrate its charm:

Villoteau mentions his regret at not having been able to note down 'the accent of yielding abandonment with which the singers express the voluptuous melancholy which fills the majority of these songs.' Some of the present-day Persian love-songs are said to be sung to poems of Hafiz. The occupational popular song is also found everywhere. In general, the standpoint taken by the Arab proverb, 'Who does not hunt, does not love, is not moved by the sound of music nor raptured by the fragrance of blossoms is no man,' is that of the Mohammedan Orient as regards the art of sound.

Though, strange to say, Arab music at the time of its greatest florescence possessed no system of notation, an elementary alphabetical notation has since been invented and is now in use.

In the main, the differences between Oriental music and our own may be summed up in the words of Saint-Saëns: 'Oriental musical art is another art. The musical art of antiquity is founded on the combination of melody and rhythm. To these our art adds a third

element—harmony.' And, however much they differ from our own, it should always be borne in mind that 'the subtly ingenious mathematical subdivisions of the Persians and Arabs, the excessive modal elaboration of the Hindoos, the narrow and constrained stiffness of the Chinese, the ambiguous elasticity of the Japanese, and the truly marvellous artificiality of the Javese and Siamese systems are all the products of human artistic ingenuity working instinctively for artistic ends.'

II

An account of the uses of such music and the rôle it plays in customs far different from our own calls for some description of the instruments employed. Every nation had its own peculiar instruments. Those of percussion seem to us particularly characteristic. Such Oriental coloration as has been applied to our modern music has been usually in the way of rhythm emphasized by strange instruments of percussion. Drums, tam-tams, gongs, etc., do not fail to suggest at once the spirit of barbarous or outlandish peoples. The Peruvians and Aztecs had a variety of drums. The Aztecs used the *huehuetl* and the *teponastle;* the one, a drum struck by the fingers, a wooden cylinder three feet high, with a deer-skin head which could be loosened or tightened at will; the other a hollow closed cylinder of wood, having two longitudinal parallel slits close together, the strip of wood between which was struck with two drumsticks whose ends were covered with rubber. This instrument is still used by the Mexican Indians. It sounds a melancholy note, and one audible at a great distance. The Aztecs also used an enormous rattle, the *axacaxtli,* in place of castanets. It was a gourd pierced with holes and filled with small stones.

The most characteristic Chinese instrument of percussion is the *king,* a set of graduated plates, stones,

or bells, hung in a frame and played with a mallet. The tone produced is smooth and sonorous. In addition, the Chinese, Japanese, and Indo-Chinese have a quantity of metal gongs and cymbals, bells, tambourines, castanets, and drums of all kinds. In Siam and Burmah there is the *ranat,* a set of wooden or metal bars played with a mallet, in reality a xylophone; and in Java the *anklong,* of the same family, the bars of which are of bamboo. The Hindoos and Mohammedan Orientals also have a great number of drums, tam-tams, gongs, etc., which is not surprising in view of the predominant part rhythm was given in their music.

The stringed instruments are not less numerous. They appear to have been unknown to the Aztecs, and the Peruvians used only the *tinya,* a guitar with six strings. But the Chinese had a great number of them, among which the *kin,* a small lute with seven strings, held a peculiar place. It was long an object of veneration. Sages alone might venture to touch its strings; ordinary mortals should be content merely to regard it in silence with the most profound respect. An elaborate psaltery or zither called *che,* with twenty-five strings, was much in use, and there were several bowed instruments in the viol family, of uncertain ancient descent. The Cambodians, too, have instruments of the viol family, notably the *tro-khmer,* a three-stringed viol held like the 'cello when played. The Siamese, Coreans, and Annamites all use instruments of the guitar and mandolin family with a varying number of strings. In Burmah the favorite instrument is a queer harp with thirteen strings called the *soung.* In Japan there are the *koto,* which is a pleasing-toned zither with thirteen strings; the *samisen,* a small guitar associated with the Geisha girls, the *buva,* a type of lute, and the *kokin,* a primitive violin. One finds in India the *sarindas* or *sarungis,* viols with sympathetic wire strings; the *vina,* most generally popular of Hindoo stringed

instruments, a sort of lute with two gourd resonators; and the *tambura,* a long slender guitar with three or more strings. But of all the stringed instruments of the Orient *el'ud* of Arabia is most famous. It is no other in name or fact than the lute, with broad, pear-shaped body, short neck bent back at the head, and four or more strings. Introduced by the Moors into Spain about 800 A. D., it became the favorite instrument of all Europe, was developed and improved with every care, was beautified with finest art and workmanship. From Arabia, too, may have come to Europe the first primitive violins. The Arabian *rebab* and the Persian *kemangeh* are almost identical in principle with our violin. The Arabian *santirs* and *kanoons,* zithers with many strings, played with plectra adjusted like thimbles on the finger-tips, have remained Oriental.

Wind instruments are common to all races. Flutes and fifes were known both to the Aztecs and Peruvians, and flutes, flageolets, oboes, horns, bagpipes, and trumpets are in constant use among the others. With the Aztecs conch-shells took the place of trumpets of metal. Deserving of special mention are the Chinese *cheng,* a set of small bamboo pipes with free reeds, precursor of the modern organ; the Hindoo *tubri,* a popular form of bagpipe used by the snake charmers of India; and the Arab *zamr,* a particularly shrill variety of oboe.

Thus we find in use among ancient semi-civilized peoples and among the Oriental races of the past and present the three great families of musical instruments; instruments of percussion, string instruments, and wind instruments, from which we have chosen and developed our orchestra. We are recalled to the remark of Saint-Saëns, already quoted, that all the musical systems of these peoples were products of human artistic ingenuity, working instinctively for artistic ends. The instinct for expression in music works so far in all

races alike. But whereas those races whose music we are discussing were content with the harsh or dry sounds of the primitive instruments we have mentioned, the races of Europe have been impelled by the desire for ever richer and more flexible tone to develop and improve these instruments. Of the clumsy, hoarse viol they have made the perfect violin; of the hunting horn the mellow French horn of the orchestra; of the tremulous clavichord and spinet the powerful pianoforte. Music has become an art of sound. Those people whom, for the sake of convenience, we group together in this chapter as exotic never dissociated music from the dance or from elaborate ceremonies of one sort or another. The art of music hardly attained independence. Therefore we are almost at a loss to appreciate it outside the highly ceremonious societies in which it played its part and a discussion of some of the uses to which it was put is necessary in our chapter.

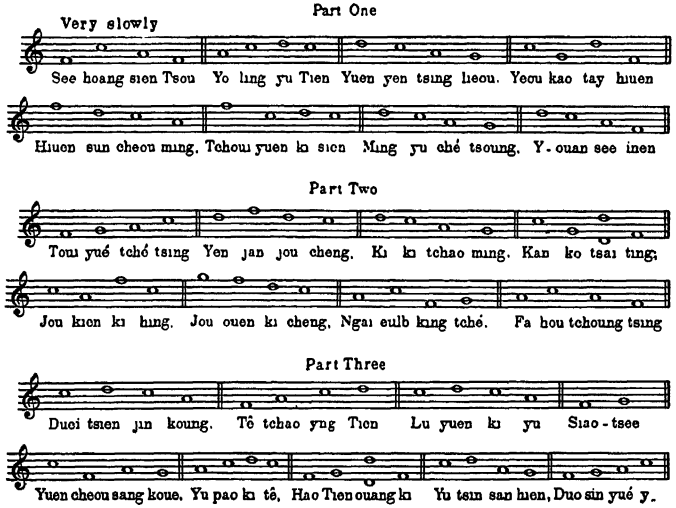
III

With the exception of the Mohammedans, the first and foremost use of music among the exotic races has been in religious rites of one sort or another. And in this connection it is in most cases an accompaniment to religious dancing and pantomime. Music is rarely looked upon in the Orient as a means of social diversion or artistic enjoyment in itself alone, such as we consider music of the orchestra or the string quartet. Only in the form of poetic song or of orchestral accompaniment to the religious or secular ballet is it highly appreciated.

The hymns chanted in a sing-song manner, the monotonous tunes accompanying the temple services and sacred dances of the ancient Mexicans would, no doubt, prove intolerably wearisome to our ears, but the Aztecs took such pleasure in them that they often

sang during entire days. And, quite in the eighteenth century manner, the wealthy Aztec nobles maintained choirs of singers and bands of professional musicians. At the great Sun-feast of the ancient Peruvians, 'the long revelry of the day was closed at night by music and dancing.' Some sort of song flourished among this people. There was a class of minstrels. Aside from the traditional melodies which have already been mentioned, the music of some of the distinctively Inca (not Spanish) dances, the *huaino,* the *cachua,* the *cachaspare,* has come down to our own day.

In China music is for the most part confined to sacred ceremonies and dancing. Père Amoit, a French missionary who spent some time in China in the second half of the eighteenth century, wrote down the following celebrated chorus; a hymn in honor of the ancestors, sung in the emperor's presence to the accompaniment of sacred dances, and the typical Chinese orchestra:

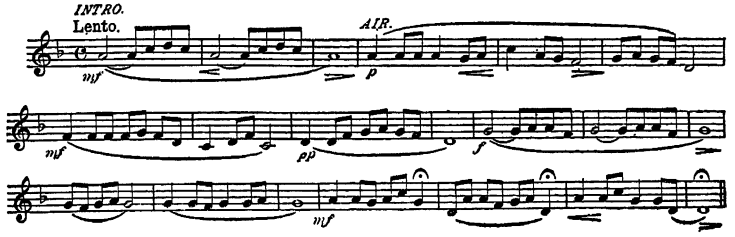


At private and ceremonial banquets, also, dancing to orchestral accompaniment is usual. *Solo,* in the prov-

ince of Yunnan, the most southwestern division of China, supplies the musicians and dancers for the private orchestras and entertainments of mandarins throughout the Celestial empire. Then, too, the Chinese orchestra finds a place in theatrical representations. The songs to be heard in every Chinese city at eventide to the crude accompaniment of mandolins and guitars may attest a popular fondness for music, but the gongs continually sounding in the temples and innumerable tinkling bells upon the towers and pagodas can hardly be said to constitute music.

In Siam, Burmah, Cambodia, and Java the arts of music and dancing have always been held in high esteem. In Java the native dances are marked by gravity and harmony of movement. The average ambulant band in that country consists of six players, while the *gamelags* of native sovereigns like the sultan of Djokka or the emperor of Solo usually comprise a dozen. The Siamese have ballet performances of posturing and slow, deliberate dancing, most of which are pantomime plays with orchestral accompaniment, the story chanted by a kind of Greek chorus behind the scenes. The king of Cambodia maintains a large troupe of dancers, chosen among the most beautiful women in his realm, who preserve the tradition of the ancient dances of the land. The following air is a prelude to one of these Cambodian dances, sung by a female chorus with orchestral accompaniment:

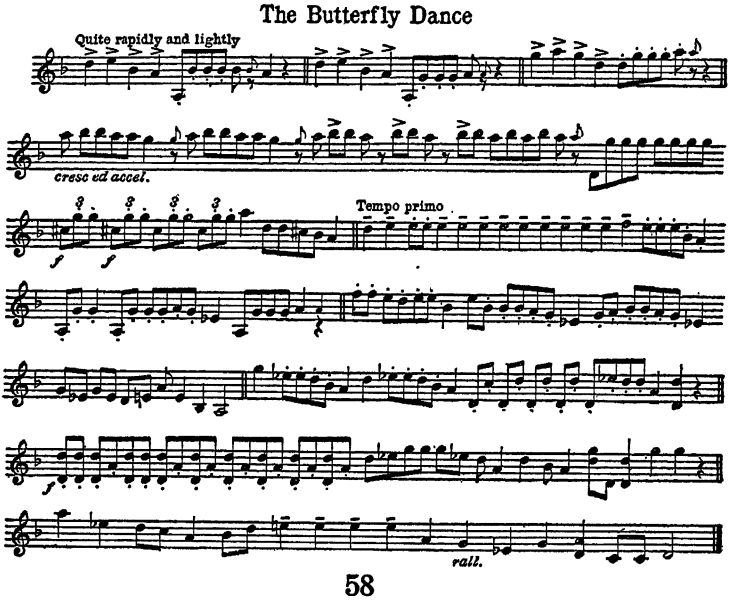
Cambodian Dance



In both these countries, as in Annam and Burmah, it is not the orchestra that leads the dancers, but the dancers who are followed by the orchestra. And in nearly all cases these pantomimes are of an allegorical or mythological character. Similar performances, notably 'devil dances,' are given in lamaseries of Tibet, Mongolia, and Siberia in which the Buddhist monks, in costume and mask, represent gods, devils, mythological kings, and other traditional characters.

The airs of the sampan-men of the Hue River in Annam are often beautiful. In alternation with their wives they sing simple ballads full of poetry and grace as they float down stream at night. Peculiar are the orchestras of the blind, made up of poor families, some one member of which is sightless, who sing love-songs before the village tea-houses for a pittance.

In Japan the 'geishas' perform their poetic dances, 'The Leaf of Gold,' 'The Butterfly Dance,' to the sound of a vague, discreetly agreeable accompaniment. The



geishas' music is that of the plucked string, and is generally vague in form. The *koto* and the *samisen* are the representative instruments, though sometimes the musicians sing a few measures. Harmony in our sense of the word is entirely lacking. In the Buddhist temples the entire service is intoned on one note, but the priests sing successively at a different pitch, and the chanting is punctuated by the occasional clang of cymbals and the deep, rich tones of the great gong, a strange and impressive combination. At the time of the various Japanese flower festivals, those of the azaleas, of the flowering plum and cherry, when the country is glad with pink and white blossoms, roving bands of musicians and dancers in grotesque costume add to the gaiety of the occasion.

In Hindustan dance music (vocal and instrumental combined) plays an important part in the religious ceremonies of the temples, both in the voluptuous dances of the *devadhazis,* or bayadères,* and in the chanting of the *montranis,* scriptural formulas set to a fixed musical rhythm. The size of a Hindoo orchestra varies, and the dance-music it plays is not always of a sensuous, erotic type, but often very animated and vigorous in character, such as accompanies the dancing at the courts of the rajahs. Music frequently accompanies dramatic representations as well, and there is a great deal of popular song. The Hindoos have *dhourpad* and *kourka,* warlike hymns, *hoti,* canticles in honor of Krishna, *stouti,* official odes, *bichnoupoud,* evening songs, *kheal,* love songs, *sohla,* nuptial songs, *thoumries,* patriotic songs, *palma,* cradle songs, and *darda,* love songs. In many cases Hindoo music shows signs of Mohammedan influence, especially in the variety and liveliness of its rhythm. It is curious to note that

* In the 'dance of Krishna,' a three-day religious saturnalia in honor of the youthful god, and in the obscene rites of Kali, the black goddess, the *devadhazis* portray all the phases of physical passion.

the use of certain types accompanying instruments is restricted to certain social classes, priests, mendicant holy men, dancing girls, and so forth.

Mohammedan music is associated with a wide variety of voluptuous secular dances, for the Mohammedan Orient possesses an art of dance equal to the most delicate inspirations of our poets. There is the dance of the *Ouled Nail,* the famous dancing girls of Biskra, the Tunisian 'Dance of the Hair,' * the Algerian 'Dance of the Pitchers,' the dances of the Egyptian Ghaouazi or 'Almees,' exponents of what is known to us as the *danse du ventre,* of which one of the dance airs follows:

Ghaouazi Dance

There are the dances of Syrian, Soudanese and other dancing-girls. Then there are the special dances, accompanied by choral singing and instrumental music, that celebrate the nuptial ceremony throughout the Orient.

IV

The variety of customs, of traditional observances and usages interwoven with exotic music is endless. Many religious chants, for instance, are fixed by tradition, and are undoubtedly of high antiquity. Such

* 'A number of young girls slowly and gracefully sway and twist their lithe bodies in rhythm to the music of flageolets playing in minor mode. Most of the time they dance on their knees, bending and twisting, their hair sometimes standing out almost straight, then falling about their heads.'

is the chanting of the sacred books in the Temple of the Sacred Tooth in Ceylon, where on each night of the full moon the whole text of the 'Tripitakas,' or 'Three Baskets' of wisdom, is recited by relays of yellow-robed priests, succeeding each other every two hours between the dark and the dawn. They are said to chant in deep resonant voices, as steady and continuous as the roar of the surf, without break, quaver, or pause. When we consider that Buddhist priests have repeated these sacred texts in this manner on every night of the full moon for twenty-eight centuries, the traditional cantillation of the Koran appears a thing of recent date. The following interesting 'call to prayer' of the muezzin has been traditionally handed down, and its chant is supposed to antedate the era of Mohammed:

And the Hindoo *ragas* and *mantranis* offer further proof of the conserving examples of tradition.

A curious custom among the Chinese of immemorial antiquity is that of attaching whistles weighing only a few grams to the tails of pigeons soon after they emerge from the shell, by means of fine copper wire. The whistles are of two kinds; bamboo, with from two to five tubes, or gourds, with sometimes as many as twenty-five apertures. All the whistles in a flock are tuned to a different pitch. As they fly about Pekin and

other cities they fill the air with a sort of wind-blown music. It is interesting as a commentary on the Chinese national love of sweet sounds.

A custom of the Mohammedan Orient is the use of the flute in services for the dead. Modern Arab mortuary hymns are sung to the accompaniment of the flute, and the employment of the instrument in this connection dates back to ancient times. It is customary in almost every occupation in the Orient to sing traditional songs while work is going on. The Arab camel-drivers have a melody of strange intonations and long-drawn-out sounds which may have come down from the days of Antar; the boatmen on the Nile, the *fellahin* toiling on its banks, the ambulant peddlers of Oriental cities, all have their traditional airs or cries. Some are very poetic; the water carriers of Mecca sing when they dispense their wares: 'Paradise and forgiveness be the lot of him who gave you this water!' When, in June, Arab boys offer bunches of fragrant pink jasmine buds, enclosed in fig-leaves, for sale in the streets of Kairowan, those who buy return to their work chanting in a quaint minor key: 'We render thanks to Allah for sending rain to make the flowers bloom.' The Burmese love to thresh rice to the sound of music, and the Buddhist nuns in Japan solicit contributions by striking small metal gongs attached to their belt with little wooden hammers carried in their hands. The Hindoo palanquin-bearers, the Japanese rickshaw-men, the Chinese coolies and sampan-men, all have their characteristic songs, most of them traditional, for the East is slow to change.

* * *

The art of music in the Orient and the art of music in Western Europe have little in common. It may be that Christian music in the first few centuries of its

existence was vaguely similar to that music we have been discussing, but after harmony found its place in our music a comparison between the two arts is far to seek. In Oriental music the dominant feature is rhythm, insistent and often unvaried. This may be partly because rhythm is the most exciting element in music and the most immediate in its appeal, partly because in the Orient music was and is almost never dissociated from the dance or from some sort of regular movement such as rowing or reaping. In our music rhythm is constantly varied and subtly disguised. As for melody, the Orientals are bound to short phrases repeated again and again, lacking contrast and only primitively balanced; and most of their melodies are in scales different from ours. Of harmony they have relatively no idea, whereas the music of Western Europe has been subjected to the tremendously powerful influence of harmony in one form or another for nearly a thousand years. Hence, even though the rhythm and melody in both have come from the same instinct in the race of man, the Western and the Eastern arts of music seem almost radically different.

In general the difference between the two is only exaggerated by the few cases in modern music when composers have made use of Oriental themes or rhythms or instruments. Such cases by no means show a working together or an approach of the two systems; for the mere fact that a certain twist of melody, a certain insistence of rhythm, a beat of the tam-tam or the gong can give a strong Oriental color to music proves how foreign Oriental music still sounds to our ears. It may be said that European music has been influenced by Asiatic music hardly at all, unless, possibly, the prominent, almost barbaric rhythms of some Russian music have sprung from a mixture of the Oriental with the Slav.

F. H. M.

CHAPTER III

THE MOST ANCIENT CIVILIZED NATIONS

Conjecture and authority—The Assyrians and Babylonians; instruments; scales—The Hebrews—The Egyptians; social aspects; Plato's testimony; instruments—Egyptian influence on Greek culture and its musical significance.

THE researches and discoveries of the past fifty years in the valley of the Nile and among the deeply buried ruins of Babylon and Nineveh have thrown light on much that was hitherto obscure in the history of the ancient cultured nations of the East. Yet, even to-day, our knowledge of that history is at best fragmentary and largely conjectural. Out of the mass of fragments and conjectures at our command we can pick very little that will fit into the structure of an authoritative musical history.

We know definitely that the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and Hebrews possessed in their heyday an advanced civilization and a large amount of æsthetic culture. From analogy with other old civilizations of which we have more accurate knowledge, however, we have no reason to suppose that their musical culture kept pace with their advance in other arts. From the plastic to the pictorial and last to the musical seems to have been the historical order of advance in the evolution of artistic expression. Music, to quote John Addington Symonds, 'is the essentially modern art.' Nevertheless, even in default of any more specific evidence, we could safely assume that musical culture among the ancient civilized nations had advanced considerably beyond the stage reached by primitive peoples.

I

In support of this assumption we have an amount of definite evidence; which indeed goes very little beyond a corroboration of our beliefs. In the case of the Assyrians and Egyptians this testimony consists of bas-reliefs and mural paintings representing musical instruments, and a few actual instruments which have been discovered in the ruins of Nineveh and in the tombs of Egyptian kings. These sculptures show a wide variety of instruments, the general construction of which would indicate considerable musical knowledge, and they testify clearly that among the Assyrians and Egyptians music was an indispensable adjunct to all affairs of ceremony, and consequently, in all likelihood, a subject for serious cultivation.

The Assyrian bas-reliefs represent chiefly historical events, religious ceremonies, and royal entertainments. We have no means of knowing whether the musical instruments shown thereon were the only ones in use among the Assyrians, or whether there were not other instruments in widely popular use which the priestly conventions excluded from all ceremonial observances. The instruments represented, however, are numerous and interesting. Judged by the frequency of its appearance on the monuments, the favorite instrument of the Assyrians seems to have been the *asor,* which consisted of a square or triangular frame mounted with six to ten strings of silk or catgut and was played with a plectrum. It was carried in front of the performer by means of a strap slung over his shoulder, and both hands were used in playing it—the right with the plectrum and the left either to twang the strings or to stop any unnecessary vibration. The number of strings on this or on any other Assyrian instrument can only be conjectured. Apparently the artist was never at pains

to secure fidelity of detail, for sometimes there are more strings than tuning-pegs and sometimes the reverse.

After the *asor* the harp seems to have come next in popular estimation. The Assyrian harp was an imposing instrument, about four feet high, and was carried in ceremonial processions before the breast of the performer, much as a side-drum is carried in a military band. It was furnished with tuning-pegs and with about twenty strings, probably of silk, but possibly of catgut. The most essential point of differentiation between the Assyrian harp and the modern instrument was the lack of a front pillar. This would argue a rather weak and harsh tone; though if the frame were made of metal or ivory—as in the case of the later Egyptian harps—it would allow of sufficient tension to secure a tone not necessarily very inferior to that of our own harp.

Besides the *asor* and the harp the representations of Assyrian stringed instruments included the lyre, dulcimer, and tamboura or lute. The Assyrian lyre strongly resembled the Nubian *kissar* of to-day. It carried from four to ten strings tied around the upper bar, which was raised or lowered to change the pitch, and it was probably played with a plectrum. The tamboura was an instrument resembling the banjo or guitar and was the prototype of the instrument which may be found all over the East at the present day. The dulcimer contained about ten strings and was played with a plectrum.

Of wind instruments the Assyrians possessed only pipes and trumpets. Their trumpet was a small instrument, either straight or slightly curved, and was probably made of horn. Presumably it suffered from severe limitations musically. The nature of their pipes, however, indicates that the Assyrians had done some successful experimenting in musical effects and must

have constructed a definite scale system of some sort. In the museum of the Royal Asiatic Society in London there is a small Assyrian pipe of baked clay in a very good state of preservation. It is about three inches long and has two holes equally distant from the end. The fixed notes on this pipe are a tonic, third, and fifth. The closing of the left finger-hole produces a note about a quarter tone lower than the right, and it is possible that this was intended for a minor third. Of a later development than the single pipe was the double pipe, which consisted of two pipes, sometimes of equal, sometimes of unequal length, held one in each hand, with the playing ends of both in the mouth. Probably one of the pipes gave a sort of droning accompaniment to the other and the general effect must have been something like that of the bagpipe. The syrinx, or pipes of Pan, was doubtless known to the Assyrians as well as to the Hebrews, and may be the instrument whose invention is ascribed to Jubal in Genesis.

The Assyrians seem to have been well provided with instruments of percussion, including tambourines and cymbals. Their drums were usually covered only at one end, but they also had barrel-shaped drums covered at both ends and beaten at both ends like a tom-tom. All their drums, apparently, were beaten with the hands. Bells were presumably in high favor among them, as we learn from the Bible, and there have been discovered a number of Assyrian bells of various sizes, all open at the top, like Chinese bells, and indicating that the first use of chimes antedates by a long time their introduction into India and China.

The habit peculiar to ancient artists of depicting the part for the whole, or two to mean many, makes it impossible for us to determine from the reliefs whether the Assyrians used regularly any definite number of musical instruments in their performances. We know, however, that they employed various combinations of

instruments. On the Assyrian bas-reliefs in the British Museum (some of which are fragments) we find such combinations as harp and drum; lyre, harp and double pipe; two *asors* and drum; three lyres; two trumpets; seven harps, one dulcimer; two double pipes, a drum and chorus. The predominance of strings over instruments of percussion in all representations of Assyrian concerts prompts the supposition that the music was of a soft, suave character. Rhythm seems to have been marked chiefly by the clapping of hands, and musical performances were probably accompanied usually, if not always, by singing and dancing. The evidence of the bas-reliefs on this point is supplemented by the Bible accounts of ceremonial observances among the Hebrews, who must have been profoundly influenced by Babylonian culture. Dancing was undoubtedly an integral part of all ceremonial observances and triumphal processions among the ancient nations of the East, and it would seem that as a rule it was accompanied by vocal as well as instrumental music. The Bible is replete with illuminative references on the subject.

On the Assyrian bas-relief above mentioned, showing the instrumental band and chorus, the women of the chorus are represented with their hands to their throats and are evidently performing that peculiar shrilling which constitutes the Hebrew *Allelujah,* and which may still be heard in Syria, Arabia, and Persia. This strange style of singing—if it may be so called—was a feature of triumphal processions, and was always performed by women. Various references to this custom may be found in the Bible—for instance, David's reception by the women after his victory over the Philistines and Jephthah's reception by his daughter and her companions after the battle against the children of Ammon. We can only guess as to the nature of the choral singing at Assyrian religious festivals. Prob-

ably it was in unison or octaves, and it may have been antiphonal, as it was among the Hebrews.*

The constant employment of chorus with well-developed musical instruments of different tone quality would seem to have suggested to the Assyrians at least some elementary harmonic effects. But that is entirely a matter of conjecture. As far as we know, they did not possess any system of musical notation, and, lacking that, they could not have developed an harmonic system that was anything but very crude or very haphazard. It is the opinion of Engel † that they 'produced together different notes which appeared to them agreeable in concord,' but that their instruments were too incomplete for a systematic combination of a fixed number of different parts. A scale system of some sort they must have had, but what it was we are at a loss to determine. Engel, pointing out the analogies between the various old musical systems of Oriental countries, concludes that the Assyrians probably used a pentatonic series consisting of the tonic, second, third, fifth, and sixth. Such a scale is found in China, Japan, India, Burmah, Siam, and Java, and is supposedly of high antiquity in those countries. The deduction that it was also used by the Assyrians is based on the assumption, which Engel supports by much plausible evidence, that there was a common fountain-head of all Asiatic musical art. It is also pointed out as a significant fact that the Nubian *kissar,* which so closely resembles the Assyrian lyre, is tuned in that scale. On the other hand, from the construction of the Assyrian instruments, and from comparison with the music of other peoples, even those in a more primitive state of musical development, it may be inferred that the Assyrians were acquainted with other effects and may have used other scales.

* Antiphonal is here used in the sense that one part of the chorus answered the other.

† Carl Engel: 'Music of the Most Ancient Nations.'

II

The decree which forbade the Hebrews the making of graven images, salutary as it may have been as a theological safeguard, must always prove a source of regret to the archæologist and historian. Because of it we cannot now visually reconstruct the life of the chosen people in Biblical times with the same satisfactory vividness as we can that of the Assyrians and Egyptians. We are thus deprived of what has been our chief source of information in considering the state of musical culture among the other civilized nations of the ancient East. A few illustrations of what may have been Hebrew musical instruments have, it is true, come down to us; but they are very doubtful and far from enlightening. There is an Egyptian painting of the time of Osirtasen II (about 1800 B. C.), discovered in a tomb at Beni-Hassan, which shows three men —obviously captives—playing on lyres. The hieroglyphics refer to these men as 'strangers,' and it is the opinion of Sir Gardner Wilkinson that they were Jews. We also possess some coins of the time of Simon Maccabæus (second century B. C.), on some of which are pictured lyres of different shapes and sizes, while on others are shown a couple of small figures which may represent trumpets or drums. Possibly the musical instruments carved on the Arch of Titus were exact copies of Hebrew originals, but, for all we know to the contrary, the sculptor of the arch may never even have seen a Hebrew instrument. Apart from these scanty and problematical remains, pictorial evidence of the musical culture of the ancient Hebrews is, as far as we know, non-existent.

The documentary evidence in our possession is fuller but not at all definite. It consists chiefly of the Bible and the rabbinical records; and upon the accuracy of

the information obtainable from these sources we cannot implicitly rely. This statement is made in due reverence and without any suggested denial of the spiritual truths embodied in writings which millions of men regard as sacred. The peculiar figurativeness which lends such charm to the language of the Bible makes it impossible for us to be quite sure of its literal meaning, and this obscurity is intensified by the fact that the identification of many names of things in the original text has been the purest guesswork on the part of translators. The identification of the names of musical instruments, especially, has been a stumbling block to scholars. For instance, it has never been determined which of the many names of stringed instruments occurring in the Bible refers to the harp—an instrument which was undoubtedly known to the ancient Hebrews. On the other hand, the *ugab*, mentioned in Genesis as the invention of Jubal, has invariably been translated *organ*—an instrument which just as certainly was not known to them. Nor are the rabbinical records any more trustworthy. On many points they contradict the Bible—which raises an indeterminable question of veracity between them—while on other points their statements are irresistibly provocative of doubt in the mind of the judicious reader. It must always be remembered that the Bible and the rabbinical records are, in the main, history written by unscientific historians concerning the past of their own race, and the tendency in such cases to drape an attractive garb of fiction over the bare bones of fact has in all ages been an ineradicable trait of human psychology. The old historians, while in a preferential position compared with us in regard to time, suffered obviously either from lack of knowledge or superfluity of imagination. Josephus, the most authoritative of them, tells us seriously that there were prepared for the dedication of the Temple a band and chorus consisting of

200,000 trumpets, 40,000 stringed instruments, and 200,000 Levite singers—truly a Brobdignagian ensemble!

In spite of the paucity of our information, however, we are able to form a general idea of the state of musical culture among the ancient Hebrews. Except for inevitable local differences, Hebrew music must have resembled closely that of the Assyrians and Egyptians —probably more the former than the latter, if indeed there was any radical dissimilarity between them. The Hebrew and Assyro-Babylonian people sprang from the same Semitic stock. Abraham, we learn, 'came out of Ur of the Chaldees,' and up to the time of the exile to Egypt it is probable that Hebrew and Babylonian culture were almost identical. The long sojourn of the Jews in Egypt, however, must have had a profound influence upon them. It is important to remember that they were not really captives in Egypt; they were not restricted in their activities; they were not socially ostracised. The daughter of a Pharaoh married a Hebrew, and it is reasonable to suppose that such intermarriage was common. At the period of the Exodus, therefore, there must have been little to distinguish the culture of the Hebrews from that of the other people of Egypt. Moses, we know, 'was learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians,' and in that respect he probably differed little from his followers. Later we shall advert to the complementary influence of Hebrew culture on the Egyptians as well as to the probability of Babylonian influence on the latter. Consequently the culture which the Jews brought out of Egypt must still have remained Babylonian in essence. Subsequently we see a renascence of Babylonian influence which becomes particularly noticeable after the captivity in Babylon. All the names of musical instruments given in Daniel are Chaldean. Max Müller observes that several of the apocryphal books were written originally

in Chaldee, not in Hebrew, and points out that Ezra contains fragments of Chaldee contemporaneous with the cuneiform inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes.

The rabbinical records mention thirty-six musical instruments in use among the ancient Hebrews, while the Bible contains references to about half that number. As has been said, the names of these instruments have never been exactly identified and it is possible that several different names may refer to the same instrument. The Hebrews almost certainly possessed the harp, though we do not know what they called it. The *psanterin,* mentioned in Daniel, was perhaps a dulcimer. The Arab dulcimer of the present day is called *santir.* We may assume from the representation of the lyre on the coins of the high-priest Simon Maccabæus that the Hebrews employed that instrument, and it may have been the *kinnor* of King David. The *minnim, machalath,* and *nebel* were perhaps instruments of the guitar or lute type. The *chalil* and *nekeb* were names of pipes or flutes, while the *mishrokitha,* mentioned in Daniel, is supposed to have been a double pipe. It is likely that the *ugab,* which is translated as 'organ' in the English authorized version of the Bible, was the syrinx or Pandean pipes. Forkel and other historians are of the opinion that the *sumphonia,* mentioned in Daniel, was a bagpipe, basing their conclusion apparently on the fact that the Italian peasants call the bagpipe *zampogna.* The *magrepha* was probably also a sort of bagpipe. Three kinds of trumpets were used by the ancient Hebrews—the *keven, shophar,* and *chatzozerah.* The last-named was a straight trumpet, about two feet long, and was sometimes made of silver; the others were curved trumpets probably made of horn. The *shophar* is still found in Jewish synagogues. Presumably the Hebrews used a number of drums. Of these we know only the *toph,* which has been translated timbrel or tabret, and was probably a sort of

tambourine. There still exists in the East a small hand-drum, called by the Arabs *doff* or *adufe*. According to Saalschütz and other historians, the *menaaneim*, referred to in Samuel, and translated cymbals, was the sistrum.* The *tzeltzelim, metzilloth,* and *metzilthaim* may have been cymbals. The *phaamon* (Exod. xxxviii and xxxix) were little bells on the robe of a priest, and we still find them in Jewish synagogues attached to the 'rolls of law' containing the Pentateuch.

There is abundance of evidence that music played a very important part in the lives of the ancient Hebrews and that musical performances were carefully, often elaborately, organized. As with other ancient nations of the East, the most important function of music was to lend solemnity and effect to religious ceremonial. King David, who seems to have filled in the development of Hebrew liturgical music the same rôle traditionally ascribed to St. Gregory in the history of the Christian liturgy, employed in the service of the Temple no fewer than 4,000 musicians, of whom two hundred and eighty-eight were virtuosi, and the remainder assistants and pupils (1 Chron. xxiii and xxv). In the introduction to the *Psautier polyglotte* of L'Abbé Vigouroux, the following historical sketch is given of the musical organization of the ancient Jewish cult: †

'When David ascended the throne he organized sacred music which comprised instrumentalists and singers; and the institution expressly maintained by Ezekiah and Nehemiah continued until the ruin of the Temple. In a first group there were three choir leaders: Hamon Asaph, and Ethan; in a second, fourteen Levites distributed in three choirs according to the instruments they played—the first comprising three chiefs who had cymbals to direct the singers and instrumentalists, the

* A sort of rattle.

† Translated from a summary by Jules Combarieu in his *Histoire de la musique*, Vol. V, Chap. XIV.

second composed of eight musicians who played the *nebel,* and the third composed of musicians who played the *kinnor.* Later Daniel completed this work. Among the descendants of Levi four thousand were chosen "to praise God with instruments of music." The singers, like the priests, were divided into twenty-four classes, the chiefs of which were the sons of Asaph (four), Jeduthun (six), and Hamon (fourteen). These chiefs have under their orders two hundred and eighty-eight masters charged with instructing the others. This musical organization, established by David and conserved by Solomon, was altered more or less under their idolatrous successors; but the reformer kings, Ezekiah and Josiah, took pains to revive it. In the fifth century, under Nehemiah, they sang and played 'in the manner of David.' *

Apart from its importance in religious service, music had a deep significance in the lives of the ancient Hebrews. They attributed to it peculiar curative and inspirational powers. We know how David used it to relieve the illness of Saul, and even Elias employed it to stimulate the spirit of prophecy. It was the accompaniment of all important occasions, both sad and joyful. There is frequent mention in the Bible of triumphal songs and of the use of trumpets in war. Bridal processions were accompanied by music (Jer. vii), and it also seems to have been commonly employed at funerals (2 Chron. xxxv *et al.*). Love songs were not unknown to the Hebrews (Isaiah v; Psalm xiv), nor were they lacking in songs of a convivial and lightly popular nature. They welcomed itinerant musicians as warmly as the courts of Europe in the chivalric period welcomed the Troubadours. Indeed, from what we know of them, they seem to have been an intensely music-loving people, and this fact

* Concerning the influence of the temple and synagogue on the liturgical music of the early Christian church, see Chapter V, p. 157 ff.

can but add to our regret that we are unable to determine the exact nature of their music or what the proportions were to which they had developed it as an art.

III

Regarding Egyptian music, the evidence at our disposal is fuller and more suggestive, though the deductions to be drawn from it are hardly less conjectural. It consists mainly of monumental sculptures, mural paintings, and fragments and nearly preserved specimens of actual instruments. There are also many fugitive references to Egyptian music in the works of Herodotus, Plato, Diodorus, Siculus, Strabo, and other Greek writers. Between the earliest representations of Egyptian musical instruments and the visits to Egypt of Herodotus and Plato stretches a period of nearly two thousand years—time enough for such a complete revolution to have taken place as to render valueless the references of the Greek writers as throwing light on Egyptian musical culture at the noontide of Egypt's greatness. Yet such a revolution almost certainly did not take place. During two thousand years, as we may see from the monuments, Egyptian art stood practically still.

The system of hereditary castes was an impermeable barrier to the advance of culture. Caste conventions were elevated to the dignity of sacred laws and innovations were regarded almost as sacrilege. Herodotus, who lived in Egypt, tells us that the musical profession was strictly hereditary and had been so for uncounted centuries. No one, for instance, who was not of a family of professional singers, he asserts, could adopt the profession of a singer. Considering the rarity of good voices, even where such restrictions do not exist, one can easily imagine that vocal performances in Egypt were not stimulating. Nor could Egyptian music be

very rich in inspiration, if we are to accept the following admiring tribute of Plato, who had lived thirteen years in Egypt, and who, like other Greek philosophers, was himself a musical scholar.

'The plan which we have been laying down for the education of youth,' he says in one of his dialogues,* 'was known long ago to the Egyptians, that nothing but beautiful forms and fine music should be permitted to enter into the assemblies of young people. Having settled what those forms and what that music should be, they exhibited them in their temples; nor was it allowable for painters and other imitative artists to innovate or invent any forms different from what were established. Nor is it now lawful, either in painting, statuary, or any of the branches of music, to make any alteration. Upon examining, therefore, you will find that the pictures and statues made two thousand years ago are in no one particular better than what they make at the present day.'

As further evidence of the unchanging antiquity of Egyptian music Plato quotes the tradition that 'the music which has been so long preserved was composed by Isis.' The fact that, as Strabo says, music, both vocal and instrumental, was an integral part of the ritual in the worship of all the gods, except Osiris, tended to conserve still more strictly that rigidity of system to which Plato so admiringly refers. The priestly caste in Egypt was the perfect embodiment of petrified conservatism and its influence was all-pervading and absolute. Egyptian music must eventually have come to be a lifeless, colorless, meaningless thing—the dry and chalky skeleton of an art—and we are not surprised to learn from Diodorus (60 B. C.) that the Egyptians of his time despised it and looked upon its cultivation as an effeminate and undesirable occupation.

Comparative studies of Egyptian and Assyrian cul-

* 'Laws,' Book II.

ture lead George Rawlinson * to the conclusion that the former has been vastly overrated. While Assyrian art flourished apace, he asserts, art in Egypt remained a stunted growth. The inference that musical art among the Egyptians lagged behind that of the Assyrians is not borne out by the evidence of the monuments and mural paintings. From these we may see that Egyptian musical instruments were much superior in design and construction to those pictured on the Assyrian bas-reliefs. This, of course, may be explained by the superior mechanical talent of the Egyptians, which is apparent in their architecture, and cannot be taken as conclusive evidence of a higher æsthetic development. The whole question of the comparative culture of Egypt and Assyria is a very doubtful one. Whether Egypt was influenced by Assyrian culture or the reverse, and to what extent, is a moot point. There are evidences of similar influences in the art of both countries. The fact seems to be that Egypt and Assyria interacted on each other closely and borrowed from each other or from a common source. Their musical instruments show striking resemblances and seem to have been used in much the same way and in connection with similar ceremonies.

There are, however, important points of divergence. The *asor*, which was apparently the favorite instrument of the Assyrians, is not found represented on any Egyptian monuments that have come down to us. In its stead the harp obviously held the place of honor. The Egyptian harp was much superior to the Assyrian instrument, both in design and construction; indeed, except for the lack of a front pillar, pedals, and double strings, it must have been little inferior to our own harp, even in musical quality, while in beauty of design it could hold its own with the best we are able to show. This is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that it was brought to perfection at least three thousand

* 'The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient World.' (1862-67.)

years ago. The two ornate and beautifully modelled harps found by the English traveller Bruce, painted in fresco on the walls of the Tomb of the Kings at Thebes, are attributed to the period of Rameses II (about 1250 B. C.) and, whatever they may have been musically, they are perfect models of grace and finished workmanship. Most of the harps on the Egyptian monuments are highly ornamented and were obviously constructed with an eye to decorative effect. The harp seems to have been the instrument *de luxe* in Egypt—the necessary finishing touch to the furniture of every well-appointed home—the Egyptian counterpart of our piano. It varied in size to suit the taste, or perhaps the pocket-book, of its owner. The largest harps were almost as tall as a man and were equipped with twenty or more strings, the smallest ones had four strings and were easily carried about. In regard to the number of strings, however, the fidelity to numerical truth of the ancient artists cannot unquestionably be assumed. It is the opinion of Carl Engel that the Egyptian harp was tuned in the same diatonic series of intervals as the Greeks obtained by two conjunct tetrachords. He bases his opinion on the apparent number of strings. Probably it was tuned in a diatonic series of some sort; but opinions on the subject are the purest guesswork.

A favorite instrument among the Egyptians was the *trigonon* or triangular harp—referred to as a Phrygian instrument by Sophocles. It was small and easily carried, and its tone must have approximated somewhat that of the lyre. The latter instrument is represented frequently on Egyptian monuments and apparently varied very much in size and shape. It seems to have been much more powerful than the Greek lyre, but was not so symmetrical in design. Several well-preserved specimens of Egyptian lyres may be seen in the museums of Berlin and Leyden. One end of the top bar is higher than the other, and the instrument obviously

was tuned by sliding the strings up and down the bar. On the whole, the Egyptian lyre must have been a somewhat crude and ungainly instrument. It does not seem to have been nearly so esteemed as the harp, nor did it apparently hold the same place in popular regard as the tamboura or *nofre*. The latter is found represented in various shapes, and it seems likely that it was, above all others, the instrument of the people. Instruments closely resembling it are popular in many Oriental countries to the present day. These usually contain three strings, which are tuned in the tonic, fifth, and octave. It would be assuming too much to declare that the Egyptian *nofre* was similarly tuned. There is in the British Museum a small Egyptian terra-cotta vase upon which is depicted a tamboura with frets distinctly marked over the whole neck, and we may reasonably argue from this that the *nofre* players used habitually a number of strictly defined intervals. Besides the long-necked *nofre* the Egyptians possessed a short-necked tamboura strongly resembling the Arabian *oud*. They had also a peculiar instrument with four or five strings, which was carried on the shoulder; a kind of lyre which was placed on a stand and played by both hands, and a primitive variety of harmonicon.

By far the most interesting and instructive relics of Egyptian musical instruments that have come down to us are a number of pipes and flutes, many well-preserved specimens of which may be seen in the British and Leyden museums. They contain from three to five —usually four—holes, and in many of them pieces of thick straw or other similar material are found inserted in the playing ends. There does not appear to have been any restriction as to the number of holes. In the British Museum there is an Egyptian pipe about twelve inches long, with seven holes burned in the sides. Two straws of about the same length as the pipe were found with it. Straw reeds have also been

found with Egyptian flutes. The latter were very long instruments, reaching from the player's mouth to beyond the length of his arm. The most interesting and perfectly preserved specimens of those that have yet come to light are a pair of reed flutes, eighteen inches long and three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, which were discovered by the distinguished Egyptologist Flinders Petrie in a rock-hewn sepulchre at Kahan—the town inhabited by workers employed in building the pyramid of Userteen II. On these flutes were elicited the following notes:

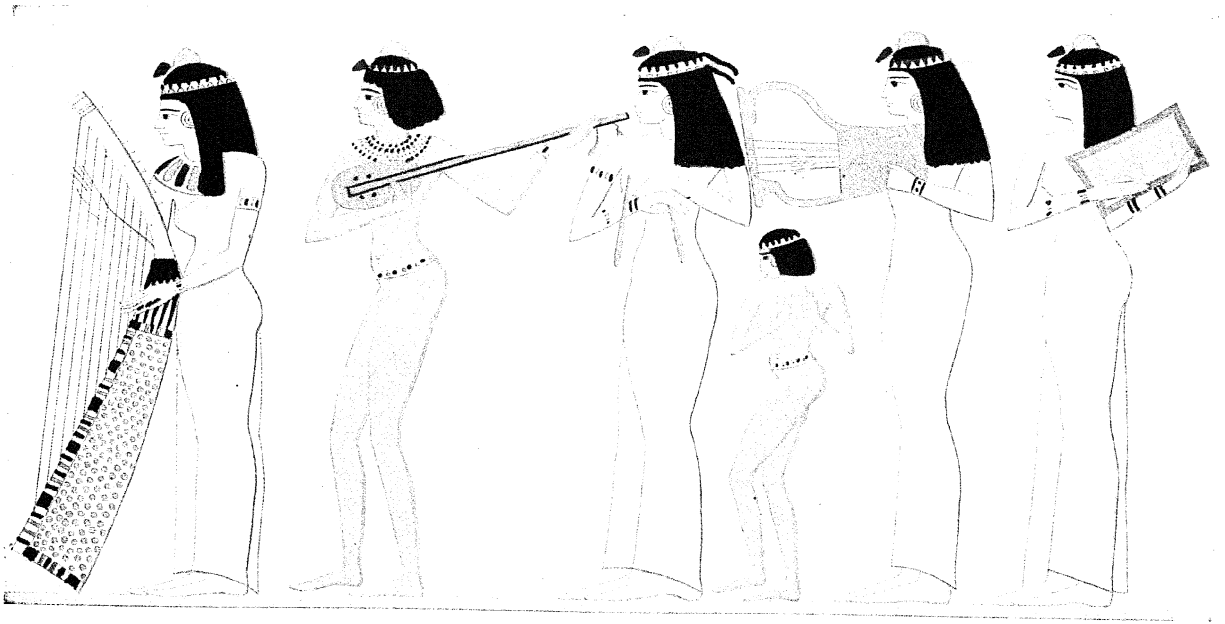
The testing of facsimiles produced between the flutes the following scale:

By varying the pressure, a fifth and an octave higher were obtained, and by the same means was elicited from the three-holed flute the complete diatonic scale of C. Allowance must, of course, be made for the possible differences between the facsimiles of these old flutes and the original instruments, as they were in the time of Userteen II. There is also to be considered a probably wide divergence in method between modern European and ancient Egyptian flute players. The experiments, however, suggest interesting speculations.

The double-pipes are represented frequently on Egyptian monuments; the trumpet less frequently. Trumpets apparently were not very popular in Egypt. They seem to have been made of wood—though brass may have been used. The scarcity of trumpets is peculiar, because the Egyptians obviously did not affect a soft, suave style of music, as the Assyrians did. Some of

their dances look almost riotous, and they must have had a strong sense of rhythm. They had a partiality for drums, of which they possessed a variety. Besides drums, their instruments of percussion included *sistra, crotola,* bells, cymbals, and tambourines. The *sistrum* or *seshesh* was a peculiar instrument, almost identical with the *sarasel* used to-day by the priests of a Christian sect in Abyssinia, and seems to have been employed exclusively in religious ceremonies. The *crotola* were two balls or knobs of wood or metal, with handles, and were used apparently in the same way and with the same effect as castanets.

The representations of Egyptian musical performances furnish a wide and fascinating field for speculation; but beyond the testimony that music played a very important part in the lives of the Egyptians they supply us with little definite information. The contention of Rawlinson that the Assyrians were more advanced æsthetically is supported to some extent by the apparent fondness of the Egyptians for barbaric rhythmical effects. The same line of reasoning, however, would place the music of Wagner and Strauss lower in the scale of evolution than that of Mendelssohn and John Field. Between the Assyrians and the Egyptians a difference in musical taste is obvious; a difference in musical development is decidedly questionable. There are always to be taken into consideration dissimilarities in national character. It is the opinion of some ethnologists that, about 5000 B. C., there came into the valley of the Nile a Semitic people from East Africa or South Arabia who mingled with the aboriginal Hamites and produced the historic Egyptians. These immigrants, it is contended, had been under the influence of the culture which had already grown up on the plains of Babylonia, and introduced into Egypt elements of art which were unknown to the ruder Hamitic stock. These elements the



Egyptians may have developed to greater perfection in certain technical aspects than the Babylonians, owing partly to their superior industry and partly to the fact that, in comparison with the Assyrio-Babylonian people, their history was peaceful, and favorable to the development of the arts and crafts.

This theory would explain the appearance of a common source of the art of both nations. It is probable, too, that Babylonian culture exercised a continuous, though perhaps slight, influence throughout the whole course of Egyptian history. That there was close intercourse between the two nations at various times is evident from many known facts in the history of both. Syria, which was saturated with Babylonian culture, was an Egyptian province; nor can the possibility be overlooked that the Hebrews, during their long sojourn in Egypt, brought to Egyptian art some of the influence of a culture that had its genesis in Babylonia. These speculations are given here because there is a general tendency to assume readily that Egypt was predominantly the influential factor in the growth of ancient culture, and because the representations of Egyptian and Assyrian musical performances show similarities which indicate that either may have strongly influenced the other.

Herodotus tells us of an Egyptian musical performance at which women beat on drums and men played on flutes, while a chorus sang and clapped their hands at the same time. This performance, it seems, was typical. The suggested effect is barbaric; but the monuments bear evidence that the Egyptians enjoyed musical performances of a much more refined character. We find represented, for example, such combinations as harp, two tambouras and double-pipe, and lyre, harp, double-pipe and chorus. In an interesting work on Egyptian antiquities edited by Lepsius * there is an

* *Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Ethiopien.*

illustration of an extraordinary concert of eight flutes. The players are divided into two sets. One man, differently dressed from the others, stands facing the group, and holds his flute as if he had either just finished playing or was just about to begin. Presumably he was either the conductor or a solo player. The illustration is taken from a tomb in the Pyramid of Gizeh and dates from the Fifth Dynasty, or before 2000 B. C. The Egyptians, obviously, adapted their music to the occasion, using different combinations of instruments for religious ceremonies, public celebrations, private entertainments, and military parades. There has been preserved on an imperfect fragment a representation of a military band consisting of a trumpet, a drum, some large instrument which is too much obliterated to be distinguished, and two *crotola.*

Dancing, an important feature of Egyptian life, formed a part both of ceremonial observances and private entertainments. The Egyptians seem to have developed dancing into a much more sophisticated art than the Assyrians, and, unlike the latter, they showed a partiality for dances of a lively, spirited nature. These were usually performed by men, who, to judge from the monuments, were equipped with all the semi-acrobatic technique of the modern ballet-dancer—even to the pirouette. The slower dances were rendered by women and were, as a rule, languorous and erotic in character.

Much has been said of the influence of Egyptian music on the Greeks, and more than due importance, perhaps, has been attached to the supposition that Pythagoras (571-497 B. C.) learned music in Egypt. *A posteriori* inferences have been drawn as to the nature of Egyptian music which are hardly warranted by the evidence. Greek literature is not lacking in references to Egyptian influence. 'The Greeks,' says Burney,* 'who lost no merit by neglecting to claim it, confess

* Chas. Burney: 'History of Music.'

that most of their ancient musical instruments were of Egyptian invention.' Greek notions of the origin of their ancient musical instruments, however, cannot be taken very seriously. The evidence inherent in the instruments themselves is more valuable and tends rather to contradict the supposition that they were of Egyptian origin. The beautifully proportioned and graceful Greek lyre is so markedly different from the clumsy and crude Egyptian instrument as to suggest an absolutely independent development. Significant, too, is the absence of the harp from all except one of the specimens of Greek art that have come down to us; though the beauty and grace of the Egyptian harp must have appealed strongly to Greek artists had they been at all familiar with it. The one exception is the representation of Polyphymnia with a harp, on a Greek vase in the Berlin Museum, and the harp in this case resembles more the Assyrian than the Egyptian instrument. It may be pointed out, however, that this vase belongs to the later period of Greek art, after the conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander had exposed the classical civilization of Greece to the full force of Oriental influence. But the case for Asiatic influence does not depend upon this vase. There is significance in the fact that most of the famous Greek musicians were from Asia Minor or adjacent islands. Marsyas was a Phrygian; Terpander, Arion, and Sappho hailed from Lesbos; Olympus, the supposed inventor of the old enharmonic scale, was a native of Mysias. Strabo,* too, speaks of the derivation of Greek stringed instruments from Asia. On the other hand, we are informed by the ubiquitous and omniscient Herodotus that the Dorians came originally from Egypt. The statements of Herodotus, however, must be taken with a large amount of reservation. 'The net result of Oriental research,' Prof. Sayce warns us, 'in its bearing on Her-

* Book X, Chap. 3.

odotus is to show that the greater part of what he professes to tell us of the history of Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia is really a collection of *Märchen,* or popular stories, current among the Greek loungers and half-caste dragomen on the skirts of the Persian empire.' * As a matter of fact, the statements of all Greek historians, except as to contemporary events, are totally untrustworthy. Excellent reporters they undoubtedly were; but they lacked the historical sense and were but scantily informed. There seems to have been in Greece a peculiar admiration for things Egyptian and a corresponding contempt for things Asiatic—the latter bred probably of the constant wars between Hellas and Persia that began with the conquest of the Lydian kingdom by Cyrus the Great. In default, therefore, of any more specific evidence the statements of Greek writers on the origins of Greek music are of little value; nor does the intrinsic evidence lead us to any more definite conclusion than the conjecture that Greek music was influenced somewhat by both Egyptian and Assyrian music, though to what extent and in what proportions it is impossible to determine.

We are equally ignorant of the nature of the Egyptian musical system. A well-defined system they had, without doubt—they systematized everything. The evidence seems to point to the fact that they used a diatonic scale, and the representations of their musical performances would indicate that they were acquainted with harmonic effects. A concert of eight flutes, for instance, in unison, or even in octaves, without other instruments of any sort to vary the monotony, would hardly have appealed to a taste as cultivated as theirs must have been. Fétis is of the opinion that the Egyptians possessed a system of musical notation, and sees in the resemblance to demotic characters of the musical notation used by the modern Greek Church evidence of

* 'Records of the Past.'

the fact that it belonged to ancient Egypt.* The presence of a system of musical notation is no proof of the coincidence of an harmonic system, but it is *prima facie* evidence of a stage of artistic development which included a sense of something more than primitive and haphazard concords. Such a stage of development we may probably credit with safety to the ancient Egyptians, and, whatever their music may have been, we can surely conclude that it had acquired at least the elementary proportions of an art.

W. D. D.

* F. J. Fétis: *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique.*

CHAPTER IV

THE MUSIC OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS

Significance of Greek music—Greek conception of music; mythical records—Music in social life; folk song; general characteristics of Greek music—Systems and scales—Pythagoras' theories; later theorists: Aristoxenus to Ptolemy—Periods of Greek composition: the nomoi; lyricism; choral dancing and choral lyricism; the drama—Greek instruments; notation.

THE importance of the music of the most ancient civilizations and its relevance to the history of music as an art may be questioned with some justification. Indeed, some historians, notably Riemann, in his scholarly *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, have practically foregone all reference to it. But an account of Greek music has unanimously been held an essential part of the scheme, for it has had an unquestioned influence upon the beginnings of our own art, and though misunderstood for centuries its theoretic system has served as the foundation of mediæval musical science.

Moreover, the Greeks, in whose civilization antiquity reached its pinnacle, manifested an attitude toward the art distinctly different from that of the older nations, an æsthetic and humanistic attitude more akin to our own, which enabled them to realize something like the degree of beauty and perfection which they are conceded to have attained in the other arts. Therefore, though music is destitute of parallels to our glorious examples of the plastic arts of antiquity, a presentation of the few facts hinting at the true merits of this lost art is distinctly pertinent.

I

It is lamentable, indeed, that next to nothing has been preserved to us of Greek music. The few frag-

ments which assiduous antiquarians have restored and deciphered are hardly sufficient to suggest its true quality, and even further restorations could do no more than confirm the present evidence, for manuscripts are but the skeleton records—the essence has been lost with the lyres and flutes, it has died with the voices of Anacreon and Sappho.

While we moderns generally deny to music any direct correspondence with the realities of life, the Greeks held it to be the most 'imitative' or representative of arts.* Not only states of feeling, but also ethical qualities and dispositions of mind were reproduced by musical 'imitation,' and on the close correspondence between the copy and the original depended the importance of music in the formation of character. Aristotle in his 'Politics' says: 'In rhythm and melodies we have the most realistic imitation of anger and mildness, as well as of courage, temperance, and all their opposites.' Here is an important element in the Greek conception of music, radically different from our own. Its imputed educational value, its influence upon the character of the youth, and even its therapeutic powers are no less foreign to our modern ideas.

Plato in his 'Republic' sets downs the study of music and its regulation as an essential part of the ideal commonwealth. 'Beginning from early childhood,' he says, 'they teach and admonish their sons as long as they live. . . .' 'Again the music masters in the same way pay attention to sobriety of behavior and take care that the boys commit no evil, and when they have learned to play upon the lyre they teach them all the compositions of other good poets, lyric poets, setting them to music, and they compel Modes and Harmony to become familiar to the boys' souls in order that they may become more gentle, and, being themselves more rhythmical and harmonious, they may be serviceable in word and

* Imitation (μιμῆσις) is a term commonly applied to the fine arts.

deed; for the whole life of man requires rhythm and harmony.' And elsewhere in the same work: 'But when handsome amusements are appointed them in their infancy, and when by means of music they embrace that amusement which is according to law (contrariwise to the others), this music attends them in everything else and grows with them, and raiseth up in the city whatever formerly was fallen down.'

As illustrative of the moral import of music Plato says: 'Is it indeed then according as I say, that we shall never become musicians, neither we ourselves, nor the guardians we say we are to educate, before we understand the images of temperance, fortitude, liberality and magnificence, and the other sister virtues? . . .' Hierocles attests Pythagoras' belief in the therapeutic powers of music in the following quotation: 'He look'd on Musick as a great advantage to Health and made use of it in the diseases of the body as well as of the Soul; for, as Plato said after him, Perfect Musick is a Compound of Voices and of Instrumental Harmony. The Voice alone is more perfect than instruments alone; but it wants one thing to complete its Perfection; and that one thing is Harmony: and Instruments alone, without a voice, yield only rambling and extravagant Sounds, which may indeed affect and move the Soul, but cannot instruct nor form the Manners which ought to be the chief end of Musick.' *

Before considering the probable character and form of ancient Hellenic compositions we must record that music hardly existed among the Greeks as an independent art. The word μουσική held a much broader meaning than our own word music; it included poetry, at least in its narrower sense, and in a measure dancing and mimetics. Likewise it was closely allied, through their philosophy, to mathematics and astronomy. But

* Harmony here does not mean polyphony or heterophony, as will be seen hereafter.

to say that music was subordinate to poetry is inaccurate, for, while vocal compositions, both solo and choral, made up the bulk of Greek music, instrumental music was practised not only in accompaniment, but independently also, and virtuosity on the *kithara* and *aulos* was developed to a considerable degree. The great musicians of Greece, however, were at the same time its great poets. Homer and Hesiod may be thought of as musicians, no less than Pindar, the adored creator of the first dithyramb, and Æschylus, the greatest of dramatists. It may be interesting at this point to reproduce the table compiled by Aristides Quintilianus (second century A. D.), one of the most eminent Greek theoreticians of the Roman era, to show the various branches of musical science as then understood. This

I. Theoretical Part	A. Natural Science	a)	Arithmetic (musical mathematics)
		b)	Physics (acoustics and physiology of hearing)
	B. Musical Technology	c)	Harmonics
		d)	Rhythmics
		e)	Metrical Science (Prosody)
II. Practical Part (Applied Music)	C. Composition	f)	Melodic invention
		g)	Formation of stanzas
		h)	Poetry
	D. Musical Practice	j)	Instrumental practice
		k)	Singing
		l)	Mimetics

illustrates clearly the union of poetry and music, the perfect fusion of two arts in which neither predominated, but was only an inherent part of the other.

The earliest references to the art, in the works of Homer and Hesiod,* who themselves may be deemed the first poetic singers of record, are clothed in mythical terms, and a brief review of these references may be of interest as reflecting the racial attitude toward music. In Hesiod we read much about the immortal muses, the nine daughters of Zeus (all-father) and Mnemosyne (memory), and of these especially three are of interest to us: *Calliope,* the muse of epic song; *Euterpe,* the muse of melody and lyric poetry, and *Terpsichore,* the muse of choral dance. According to Homer these entertained the gods by singing (Iliad, i, 604), while song itself the poet considered a direct gift of the gods.

The greatest mythical figure of Greek music is Orpheus, who, like all the early civilizers of Hellas, was a Thracian, a people afterward considered barbarous by the Athenians. Orpheus was said to be the son of the king of Thrace, by the muse Calliope, but another account makes Apollo his father. He was one of the Argonauts, and indeed it was the stirring tones of his lyre as he chanted of adventure on the sea that stirred the good ship *Argo* to her launching when all the strength of the heroes had failed in the task. On passing the Island of the Sirens the Argonauts owed their safety to Orpheus, for, taking his lyre, he sang so loudly and so sweetly as to overpower the Sirens' melodies, whereby all escaped unscathed save Butes, who plunged overboard only to be snatched up by Aphrodite. Again it was the urging of Orpheus' lyre that gave the strength to the Argonautic rowers to speed between the clashing rocks, the Sympleglades, after the dove had passed through and the rocks had recoiled. The skill with which he plucked the strings moved even the trees and

* These poet-singers, indeed, *chanted* their verses—perhaps not to fixed melodies, but according to a recognized style of cantilation which varied according to the different species of poetry, and was emulated by the readers or singers other than the bards themselves.

rocks, and the wild beasts of the forest surrounded him in delighted transports as he sang.

The story of Orpheus and his wife, the nymph Eurydice, is perhaps the best known of all myths connected with music. Eurydice, it is said, was slain by the bite of a serpent as she was fleeing from the unwelcome love of Aristæus, son of Apollo. Orpheus determined to descend to the Underworld, and, using the power of melody to soften the hearts of the rulers of that abode of Darkness and of Death, to regain possession of his beloved. Armed with his lyre, he easily obtained admittance to the realm of Hades, and in course of time made good his entrance to the palace of Pluto. At the music of his lyre the wheel of Ixion stopped, Tantalus forgot the thirst which was his eternal torture, for a moment the vulture ceased his perpetual gnawing at the vitals of Tityus and Pluto, and Proserpina granted the prayer of the impassioned melodist, with one condition only: that he should not look back upon his almost-rescued wife before he had reached with her the confines of the land of darkness. Impelled by love and eagerness, Orpheus violated this condition and Eurydice vanished evermore from his sight.

Of the poetical works ascribed to Orpheus, those which remain appear to have been written chiefly by Onamacritus and Cercops, and they illustrate some of the earliest forms of hymns with a musical accompaniment. Orpheus is also credited with the formulation of an augmentation of the scale, having added two strings to the seven-stringed lyre which Apollo had given him.

The legend of Amphion also signifies the peculiar veneration in which music was held by the Greeks. The son of Zeus (or Jupiter) and Antiope, he became king of the Thebans, and Hermes gave him a lyre of gold. By its power alone, the story runs, he built the walls of Thebes, the stones taking their places in obedience to the strains of his instrument. All of which

serves to illustrate the high conception which the Greeks had of the art, how constantly it occupied their thoughts, and what extraordinary powers they ascribed to it. This is further attested by historical evidence showing the place which music occupied in their social system.

II

There is little doubt that in the classic period at least music was an essential part of the intellectual equipment of every citizen. It assumed a public importance and received an official recognition from the state which no other people has ever accorded to it. Not only did it form an integral part of religious worship, but it occupied an important position in the great national festivals at which the intellectual accomplishments no less than the physical prowess of all Greece were matched.

The Olympic games, beginning with the year 776 B. C., and taking place regularly every four years in the plain of Alpheious in Elis (Olympia), are the oldest as well as the most famous of these festivals, and as the most comprehensive national celebrations they assumed the greatest importance. All Hellas and the colonies sent spectators and participants in the contests. While music no doubt played a great part in the celebration of the victors, in the sacred sacrifice to Zeus, and in the pageants and dances, an actual contest in music or poetry was never incorporated into the Olympic games. But the Pythic games, which took place at Delphi every nine years, and after 586 B. C. in the third year of every Olympiad, were primarily poetico-musical contests in honor of Apollo. The first day was permanently dedicated to the performance of the famous *Nomos Pythicos* (of which later). Both the Isthmian games and the Nemeic games, which took

place every two years, were likewise closely identified with music.

But besides these great national festivals, which in all amounted to two or three annually, there were a great number of local celebrations, some of which partook of an almost national character by virtue of the great influx of foreign visitors. The Eleusinian mysteries, primarily confined to the initiates, also took on the character of a popular festival by the institution of public contests and pageants, in which, of course, music played a great part. The Athenians' annual Panatheneas in honor of their patron goddess, their harvest festivals, and their Dionysos festivals; the Spartans' numerous celebrations and a host of others, all of which were dedicated to some phase of culture, will indicate in some measure the tremendous amount of time and attention which the Greeks gave to the cultivation of the representative arts.

From Polybius, writing in the second century A. D., and taking as his authority Ephorus, writing two hundred years earlier, we learn that the Arcadians ordered their State affairs entirely according to music, in such manner that not only boys, but young men up to the age of thirty were obliged to cultivate musical study continually. 'From infancy on their children are accustomed to sing according to rule the hymns and pæans with which every country district praises its gods and heroes. Later they learn the melodies of Timotheus and Philoxenos, and annually perform their choral dances in the theatre to the accompaniment of Dionysian flutes—the children their children's dances, and youths the dances of men. Throughout their whole life they institute performances in this way, not engaging foreign musicians, but relying upon their own talents, and relieving each other in turn in the execution of songs. And while it is not considered a disgrace to plead ignorance in other fields of knowl-

edge, they consider it reprehensible to decline to sing. They also practise processions to the accompaniment of flutes, and annually perform dances which they study together and produce in the theatres at the common expense.'

Not only in the public functions, but in their domestic life as well, did music assume great importance. From earliest times we have records of folk songs associated with the various occupations of ordinary life. Of these the songs which have reference to the seasons of the year and their phenomena, and which express the emotions called forth by them, are of the greatest antiquity. They were sung by country folk, by the reapers and vintners. There were two distinct classes of folk songs, the songs of sorrow and the songs of joy, both of which existed according to Homer before his time. Karl Bücher in his *Arbeit und Rhythmus* shows that in the occupational songs, where the dance did not form a part of the music, the rhythm of the occupations themselves—the handling of tools—determined the rhythm of the songs. Among such are the song of the miller while grinding, the song of the spinners, the binders of sheaves, and many others. There is no doubt that these songs, expressing in simple terms the sorrows and joys of the ordinary man, had a refreshing influence upon the more sophisticated artistic creations of Greek musicians, just as our folk songs have had upon the works of our greatest composers. The private practice of the more artistic forms was also common among the Greeks. We read in their literature how the lyre was passed round at the banquet, and each guest was expected to add to the merriment of the occasion; of the bridal songs, and many other forms of choral music executed upon special occasions.

The actual character of this music we must gather from the writings about it, rather than the few fragments at hand for analysis. Just as music, because of

its moral significance, became the subject of philosophic speculation, so did its scientific side appeal to the analytic mind of the Greeks, and their mathematicians and scientists in general expatiated at length upon its theory. From their writings we adduce first of all the fact that Greek music lacked at least one of the important elements of modern music, namely, polyphony —or harmony—the quality which of all, from a modern point of view, appeals most directly to our emotions, to our susceptibility, which is most closely associated with color and 'mood.' Investigators, such as Westphal, Gevaert, etc., have untiringly striven to establish evidence of something more than simple homophony in the music of antiquity, but beyond a slight deviation in the instrumental accompaniments, partaking of the nature of grace notes, they have discovered traces of nothing but melody at the unison—or at the distance of an octave, when men and boys (or women) sang together, or when the voice was accompanied by an instrument of higher or lower pitch. Such and nothing more is the import of the testimony of Aristotle, when he says: 'Why is symphonous or antiphonal singing more pleasing than harmony? Is it not because it is the consonance of the octave? For antiphony is born of the voices of young boys and men, whose tones are equal in distance from each other as is the highest note of an octave from the lowest' (Problems xix, 29). Curious as it may seem that it should never have occurred to a people intellectually so advanced to venture experiments in the field of polyphony; that it should never have entered their minds to strike two strings of the lyre or kithara simultaneously, or that an occasional false note struck along with the right one should not have suggested the possibilities of the 'third dimension' in music, it remains a fact that in all the mass of theoretical and technical writings upon the art sufficient to reconstruct the entire 'system' of Greek music,

no mention is made of harmony or polyphony.* We can only conclude then that combinations other than the perfect consonance of the octave, all mixtures of sounds or a confusion of lines, were hostile to the Greek ideal of purity, to the underlying principle of classic simplicity.

Thus the Greeks, reduced to the resources of rhythm and melody as means of musical expression, developed these to a very high degree, in the fineness of its distinctions advanced even beyond the point which we have as yet found it necessary to reach in modern music. Their rhythm, while no doubt it had a distinct and independent existence, was primarily determined by the accent of the spoken word, the metres of poetry. Even if conceived as a musical entity, it must at all times be thought of as pertaining to the text rather than the melody. The earliest rhythm of which we have knowledge is the hexameter of the Homeric epics, and it is doubtful whether any variety in rhythmic structure was introduced until the introduction of the short iambic measures at a later period. Melody, on the other hand, while subjected to certain laws, and at first perhaps nothing more than a monotonous chant or declamation at slightly varying pitch, finally attained a variety of line and freedom of movement which rendered it capable of the most subtle shades of expression. This, we are informed, was due to a complex system of modes or scales, of *genera* and *chroai,* which, if we understand them correctly, would credit the Greek ear with much finer distinctions of pitch than we are capable of to-day.

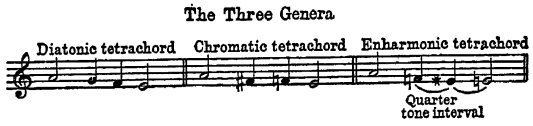
A full discussion of this system is beyond our present purpose, and the numerous controversies concerning it, which in many respects are still unsettled, place the

* The word harmony (ἁρμονία) was used by the Greeks in the sense of melody and was the name given to the so-called octave species or modes of which we shall speak hereafter. (Cf. Aristotle's 'Harmonics.')

matter outside the pale of true history; but a brief statement of its development (in historical sequence) is necessary for the comprehension of the terms which must recur in the course of our sketch.

III

We have seen that the Greeks recognized the consonance of the octave. Similarly they recognized at an early period the close relationship of the interval of the perfect fifth, and its inversion, the perfect fourth. The latter became the basis of the Greek system of scales. They divided the interval into unequal smaller intervals according to three methods, or *genera,* in each case placing the larger steps at the top and the smaller at the bottom. (An equal division of the interval has, as far as we know, never been attempted and is entirely foreign to natural impulses.) The results obtained were as follows:



Of these three tetrachords (from τετρα = four and χορδον = string) only the first was generally accepted, the chromatic was rarely used and the enharmonic probably only by *virtuosi,* for we have the testimony of Aristoxenus that the ear accustomed itself only with difficulty to the distinction of quarter tones.

By joining two diatonic tetrachords together we obtain a series of notes corresponding to the Dorian scale or mode (ἁρμονία)—more properly 'octave species'—which was accounted the oldest of all the modes:

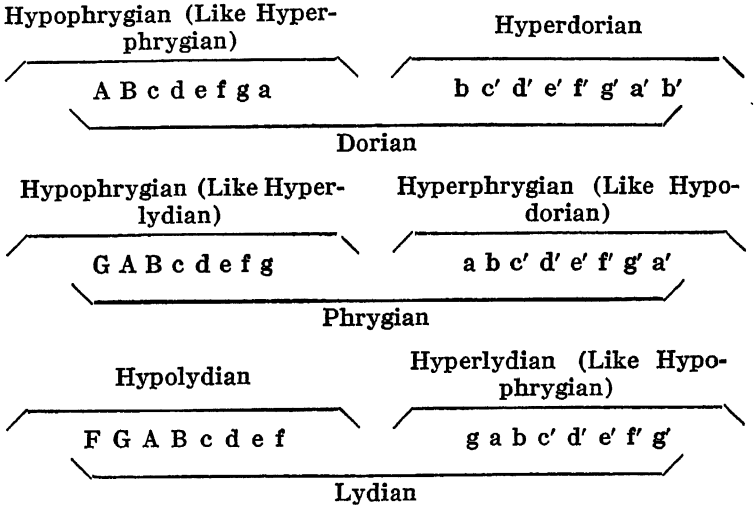
Associated with this we soon find the Phrygian mode, supposed to be of Asiatic origin and introduced into Greece by Terpander of Lesbos, one of the earliest known composers of antiquity:

and also the Lydian, the name of which indicates its origin:

Around these three may be grouped all the modes in use in classic times. These scales or octave species may be compared rather to our present major and minor modes than to our modern transposition scales, in that their identity is determined *not* by their absolute pitch, but by the intrinsic character of each mode, *based upon the distribution of the large and small steps or intervals within the octave.* But here the analogy ends, for the Greek modes cannot really be thought of in the same way as either modern scales or modes, which by long association with our harmonic system have become inseparably identified with it, so that every step of the scale has a harmonic significance as well as a melodic. Hence, there is associated with our scales the idea of *tonality,* which in its modern sense is entirely foreign to Greek music. Nevertheless a distinct character or *ethos* was ascribed to their scales by the Greeks (just as our major and minor have their individual character). The Lydian, for instance, was thought of as plaintive and adaptable to songs of sorrow; the Dorian as manly and strong, hence to be employed in warlike strains; and so on.*

* The statement of Aristotle, that certain low-pitched modes suited the failing voices of old men, is misleading, as it assumes a fixed pitch for the modes, which at least in classic times they had not, and which was

It will be seen that the above three scales correspond to the three series of notes comprised within the octaves from e to e′, d to d′, and c to c′, produced by the white keys of the piano. (While this does not indicate their absolute pitch, it represents the relative pitch at which they appear as part of the entire system, or 'foundation scale,' of the Greeks, illustrated on page 103. By a transposition of the tetrachord divisions of each of these scales, the Greeks obtained two additional scales out of each of the above three. These derived scales were denoted by the prefixes *hypo* and *hyper* (low and high), respectively:



(It is evident from this table that the Hypodorian corresponds to the Hyperphrygian, and the Hypophrygian to the Hyperlydian; hence there are only seven *different* modes.)

not their essential quality. It may be that in Aristotle's time the ethical conception of modes had been lost and that they had all become practically transposition scales. But the theory advanced by H. S. Macran in 'Grove's Dictionary,' which gives each mode an 'intrinsic' pitch character according to the high or low position of its *mese*, or tonic, is interesting. According to the laws of Greek music, this 'tonic' must be the predominating or constantly recurring note in every melody.

A common relationship was thus clearly recognized between the three scales of each group, which may be thought of as having one common tonic. It may be noted, however, that the Hypodorian probably had an independent existence before being associated with the Dorian, as is indicated by its own ethnological name of 'Æolian,' and as such was supposed to be of great antiquity. The Hyperdorian enjoyed an independent existence as 'Mixolydian.' Its invention has been variously ascribed to Sappho, Damon and Pythocleides.

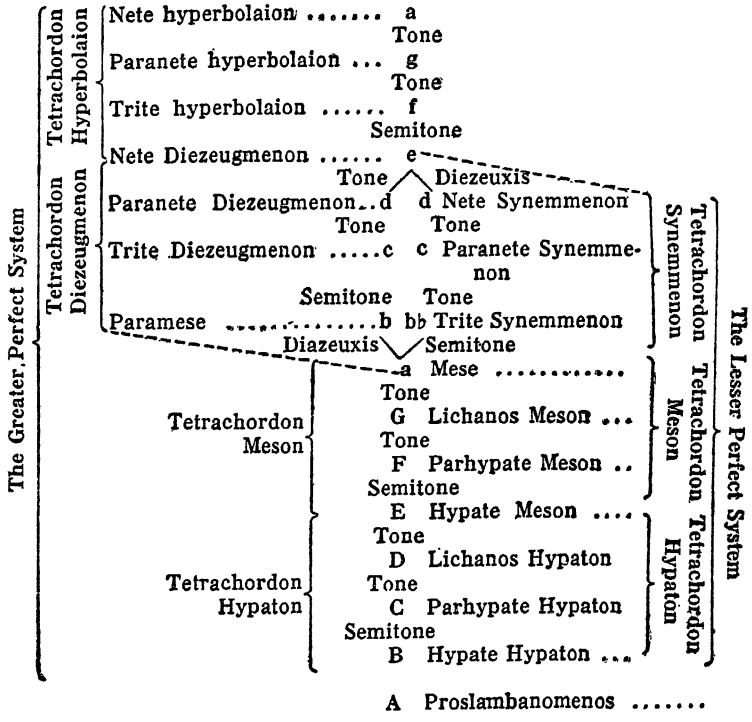
We have seen how, by joining two tetrachords, the Greeks constructed their Dorian scale (octachord). By joining *additional* tetrachords to this scale at either end they obtained their double octave scale or 'Perfect Immutable System':

It should be noted, however, that the new tetrachords are added *conjunctively*, i. e., so that one of their notes (e) coincides with the terminal notes of the original octave, while the two tetrachords making up that octave were placed in juxtaposition with a whole tone step between them. This was called the tone of disjunction (*diezeuxis*). For purposes of modulation (*metabole*) they now laid across the middle of this system an additional diatonic tetrachord (from d to a) in such a way that one of its tones (b♭) came half way between the two notes of the *diezeuxis*.* The low A was added to round out the octave. (It is a curious fact that what we call *low* the Greeks called *high* and *vice versa*.) The two tetrachords *Meson* and

* The b♭ is known to have been the first chromatic string added to the kithara, or lyre, thus enabling players to use several modes without tuning the instrument especially for them.

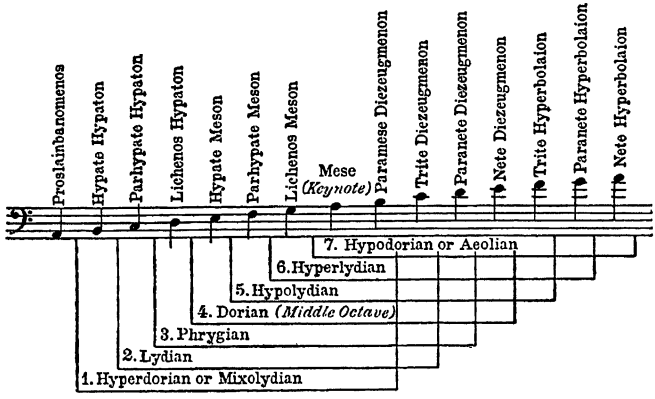
Hypaton, together with the conjunctive (*Synemmenon*), were also considered as an independent system called the Lesser Perfect System. The relation of these systems as well as the names of the individual notes are set forth on the accompanying table.

DOUBLE OCTAVE SCALE, or PERFECT IMMUTABLE SYSTEM



By carving out of the Greater Perfect System (which we may call simply the Complete System) overlapping octave sections, each beginning on a different note, the

Greek theorists found these to correspond in their intervals to each of the seven different modes, as follows: Thus all scales came to be thought of theoret-



ically as transpositions of the corresponding octave sections in the Complete System (Foundation Scale). Indeed, the entire *system* was considered as transposed and the individual tones retained their names regardless of pitch, i. e., in the Dorian mode the *mese* would always be the fourth note from the bottom, in the Phrygian the fifth, etc.

As an example, let us transpose the Foundation Scale one tone above its natural pitch:

The middle octave will now be seen to be Phrygian (corresponding to No. 3 above) instead of Dorian as before. Now in their system of transposition scales (in reality transposed Complete Systems) the Greeks gave to every scale the name corresponding to the mode of its middle octave. Before the time of Aris-

toxenus only seven of these transposition scales, or keys (τονόι) were in use. That theoretician eventually rounded out the scheme to eighteen (of which six appear in modern notation as duplicates or octave transpositions). He did this systematically by taking the interval of the perfect fifth as a basis and building on each semitone degree a group of three scales (natural, hypo, and hyper). As there were not enough of the original modes to supply names for all of the new scales, it was, of course, necessary to invent arbitrary names for the superfluous ones. By this achievement it was possible to transpose a melody into any one of the eighteen (or really twelve) keys without changing its modal character. We may therefore assume with some justification that Aristoxenus' system in a way did for the Greeks what our own equal temperament has done for modern music.

We end our brief sketch of Greek theory at this point, which may be assumed as the highest development of the system. Later systems were either based on Aristoxenus or were of reactionary nature. We must, however, for a moment retrace our steps to explain briefly the achievements of an earlier theoretician, the great philosopher Pythagoras, in the field of musical acoustics.

IV

Like many of the ancient philosophers, Pythagoras (*ca.* 600 B. C.) is known only by his disciples and by their quotations from or commentaries on his teaching. Of these the most important are Archytas (400-365 B. C.) and the great mathematician Euclid (*ca.* 300 B. C.), though there is some reason to suppose the part of Euclid's work dealing with music to have been written by Cleonides (*ca.* 200 B. C.) and by the later Pythagorean Nichomachus (*ca.* 150 A. D.).

In Hierocles' Commentaries on the 'Symbols' and

'Golden Verses' of Pythagoras, M. Dacier, the translator, amplifies the prefatory Life of Pythagoras found in Hierocles, and he recounts, as Gaudentius, Nichomachus, Macrobius, Boëtius, and others have recounted, the incident which drew the attention of the ancient founder of the great system of secret numbers to the numerical relations of Sound in Music. The quaint old story is as follows: 'Pythagoras is honored with the Invention of Harmonical Measures; and 'tis related how it happened. They write, that one Day, after he had been meditating a long while on the Means of assisting the Hearing, as he had already found means of assisting the Sight, by the Rule, Compass, Astrolabe and other Instruments, and the Feeling, by the Balance and the Measures, he chanced to go by a Smith's Shop, and heard several Hammers of different Sizes, beating Iron upon the Anvil. He was moved with the Justness of the Harmony, and going into the Shop, he examined the Hammers and their sound in regard to their Sizes; and, being returned home, he made an Instrument on the Wall of his Chamber, with Stakes that served for pegs and with strings of equal length, at the end of which he tied the different Weights, and by striking several of these strings at once he produced different Tones, and thereby learnt the Reasons of this different Harmony, and of the intervals that caused it.'

In general it may be pointed out that the Pythagorean system of harmonics was only incidental to philosophy. Thus Laloy, speaking of the musical system of Pythagoras, says: 'One finds, amid their confused accounts and contradictory assertions, a body of rules and precepts which present a "Pythagoric life," as there was an "Orphic life," in which justice, order, friendship, abstinence, geometry, and music are an integral part . . . even metempsychosis itself being merely the truth inherent in a number.'

The monochord, a single string stretched over a sliding bridge, was the basis of the acoustical experiments of Pythagoras. By shifting the position of the bridge he varied the pitch of this string. His great discovery, that which has rightly caused him to be regarded as the founder of a branch of acoustics, was that between the respective lengths of stretched strings which gave the three consonances of octave, fifth and fourth, there existed certain essentially simple relations, as follows: the octave was in the relation of a string of one half the length or double the length; in other words, the relation of 2/1; the fifth was in the relation of 3/2; and the fourth in the relation of 4/3. These intervals, apparently on account of the simplicity of their mathematical relationship, were henceforth regarded as consonant. All other intervals were dissonant, at any rate in theory. The essential difference between the mathematical theory of sound ratios as held by the Pythagoreans and that held in modern times lies in the conception of the Third. To the Greeks such an interval was entirely dissonant, not necessarily because it was displeasing to the ear, but because they either did not recognize its ratio as 4/5 or did not deem this ratio to fit in with the highly abstruse theology they had built up on other numerical ratios. The step of the Fifth was to the Pythagoreans not merely the fundamental, but also the only, basis for the determination of tone ratios, whereas to-day the Third and sometimes even the Seventh are taken into account.

As to the value that Pythagoras attached to these fundamentals, we may quote Hierocles: 'Pythagoras,' he says, 'has a very particular Opinion concerning Musick, which nevertheless the Masters of that Science, after they have duly weigh'd it, will find Just and Reasonable. He condemned and rejected all judgment that was made of Musick by the ear: because he found the Sense of Hearing to be already so weaken'd and

decay'd, that it was no longer able to judge aright. He would have Men therefore judge of it by the Understanding, and by the analogical and proportionable Harmony. This in my opinion was to show that the Beauty of Musick is independent of the Tune that strikes the Ear, and consists only in the Reason, in the confirmity and in the Proportion, of which the Understanding is the only Judge.' And he adds this remark: 'As to what he said, that the Sense of Hearing was become weak and impotent, it agrees with this other Assertion of his, that the reason why Men did not hear the Musick of the Universe was the weakness and imbecility of their Nature, which they had corrupted and suffered to degenerate.'

The error of the Pythagoreans, it may be pointed out, did not lie in the misuse of experimental data, but in the philosophical deductions therefrom. To the followers of Pythagoras a harmonic consonance was not a perception, it was a thing the existence of which could be conceived independently, a thing as real as the string which had given it birth. Sound was to them, therefore, a distinct identity, possessing attributes pertaining only to itself, yet susceptible of impression from without; it was a number realized and concrete, a number simple and all-inclusive, but, above all, a series of numbers possessing a personality, the veiling power of which both illumined and obscured a myriad symbolisms. Strict Harmonic Consonance was the utmost of numerical potency, it was a divine thought, not embodied Being. How deeply this was felt to be a truth by the Pythagoreans is evidenced by the story told of the death of Pythagoras, when the great philosopher, turning to his disciples, gave as his last instruction "Always the monochord!"

As for the value of the Pythagorean school as a whole, it is manifest that it must be considered as a group of mystical speculators, professing to be students

of music and claiming Pythagoras as their master, but, in actual verity, doing little more than reducing sounds to air vibrations and ascertaining the numerical relations of pitch. Lovers of music they were not, they were mathematical precisians, perceiving no beauty and hearing no inspiration in melodic sounds except in such wise as these fitted into an ordered sequence of arithmetical form.

The development of the Pythagorean school was rendered all the more self-centred by the vitality and strength of the Empiricists. This flourishing school of musical art was concerned with arbitrary regulations as to the most acceptable forms of composition. The Empiricists determined what melodies were suitable to certain instruments. They debarred the flute from certain festivals and admitted it to others, they decided upon the forms of construction of musical instruments, and, above all, they insisted upon the performance of certain compositions in the traditional style. While not avowedly hostile to the Pythagoreans, the Empirical school paid little heed to the mathematical speculations of the learned, and song and dance continued because music was an art. Great as was the symbolic majesty of the Monochord, the surging strain of the lyre meant infinitely more to the life of Ancient Greece.

The second great development of Greek musical philosophy is that of Aristoxenus (b. 354 B. C.), whose systemization of the transposition scales has already been mentioned. If Pythagoras established some of the fundamental rules of acoustics, Aristoxenus may be given the credit of establishing Musical Science; the former was a branch of a science, the second was the science of an art.

To put the essential principles of Aristoxenus in the simplest possible form it may be said that he established two principal rules: (1) that music accepts

Sound as sounds heard by the ear, and that the science of music must be built upon the foundation of sounds that are heard; (2) that sound-functions exist, possessing properties of sonance not directly reducible to any simple or elemental numerical ratio. The work of Aristoxenus was a revolution in musical philosophy based upon the principle of music as an organic whole of sounds bearing a dynamic relation each to the other. Aristotle had not been able to break away from the old Pythagorean conception, but Aristoxenus brushed away the misty speculations of morality, the mathematical entanglements and the musty formalism that surround the music of his time and set himself to answer the one vital question: Why does Music employ certain sounds and reject certain others?

The third stage of development of Greek music may be represented by Claudius Ptolemy, who lived in the second century of the *Christian* era. He may, with considerable authority, be deemed the inventor of the first interpreter of the equal tempered scale. R. C. Phillips has thrown considerable light upon the disputed questions involved in this matter, and to his monograph on the 'Harmonic Tetrachords of Claudius Ptolemy' (1904) we may refer the reader desirous of detailed information. Leaving the question of theory, we now proceed to pick up the thread of mythical story and trace what we can of the history of Greek composition.

V

All legendary references to the prehistoric era of Greek music point to its importation into Hellas by various artists, partly from the North (Thessaly and Thrace) and partly from the East (Asia Minor). In this we see probably nothing more than a racial recollection of the Dorian migration, which, as we know, took place about the year 1104 B. C. Orpheus, of

whom we have already spoken, must be counted among the Northerners, the Thracians, for his native place was Pieria at the foot of Mt. Olympus. His pupil, Musaios, was supposed to have lived in Athens, and his son Eumolpos was the progenitor of the famous family of priests and singers which were entrusted perpetually with the rites of the Eleusinian mysteries, sacred to Demeter. Amphion, another of the Northern artists (the miraculous builder of the walls of Thebes), is described by Pausanias (Græco-Roman historian, 2d Cent., A. D.) as a relative of Tantalos of Lydia, and to have brought from there the Lydian mode. He is also credited with having increased the lyre from four to seven strings. Heraclides Ponticus calls him the founder of the *kitharœdic* school of poetry, which was governed by a method and laws distinct from the *auletic* school, associated with the aulos, the Grecian flute, from which it took its name. The regulation of the cult of Apollo at Delphi is ascribed to Philammon, whose son Thamyris, a native of the more uncultured regions of Thrace, was said to have challenged the muses to contest, and to have been punished for this offense with blindness.

Thus the North was, as we have seen, the home of the kitharœdic muse; Phrygia, on the other hand, must be considered as the cradle of the auletic school, of which the most prominent early names are Hyagnis, Marsyas, and Olympus, the three oldest players upon the flute. The first of these was said to be the inventor of that art. Marsyas was his son and first disciple, while Olympus introduced the art into Greece and became the first Hellenic master of artistic instrumental music.*

* The distinction of an older and younger Olympus which was made by Pratinas, the Greek poet and historian, is no longer credited. At any rate, the older (whom Pratinas places before the Trojan War) is the one to whom the chief merits accrue, and therefore the only one to be considered here.

The first distinct period of musical composition is that of the *nomoi* (*sing. nomos;* Gr. νόμος = law), a certain type of melodies constructed according to fixed rules, which were sung as solos to verses whose subject was usually the praise of some god. (The singers performing them were known as *aœds* and later as rhapsodists.) The earliest *nomoi* were melodies of very simple structure, but from the first there is a distinction between the kitharœdic and auletic types, the first of which is supposed to have followed the Homeric hexameter (iambic metre), and the latter to have been based on the elegiac measures, offering, however, a considerable variety of rhythm.

The pioneer representatives of these two opposing schools were, respectively, Olympus, already familiar to us, and Terpander, both of whom belong to the seventh century B. C. Concerning Olympus' art a startling assertion is found in Plutarch. He was regarded by Greek musicians as the originator of the enharmonic genus. Upon clearer examination, it has been found that this use of the word 'enharmonic' does not coincide with the sense in which it is used above, where we explained the three *genera* of tetrachords. The quarter-tone division is, indeed, a much later product and does not seem ever to have attained to great popularity. The enharmonic scale of Olympus simply consisted of the diatonic *with a step omitted,* so as to avoid all semi-tone intervals in the melodies. This elided tone was probably the Lichanos of the Phrygian scale (ἁρμονία), or f, if we take the octave from d to d′ on the white keys of the piano. The Phrygian was naturally the scale used by Olympus, whose home was Phrygia, but he is also said to have introduced this 'enharmonic' type of melody into the Dorian mode. When the full octachord came into consideration (originally the scale was limited to seven

notes) the omission of the upper tone of the higher semi-tone interval (from b to c) followed as a matter of course. Thus Terpander's 'enharmonic' scale is seen to be simply a sort of pentatonic system, the antiquity of which is already evident from our examination of primitive music.

Little is known of Olympus' life. What part of Greece he inhabited we are not told. It seems certain that he practised his art in the service of Apollo. About one hundred years before the beginning of the Pythic games at Delphi he composed a song describing the fight of Apollo with the dragon, which afterward became known as the *Nomos Pythicos,* and which, as we have seen, was regularly performed upon the first day of the Pythic festivals.*

Of Terpander, however, the first of the *kitharœdic* nome writers, we have many isolated details, both of legend and fact. There is a story that the lyre of Orpheus was carried on the waves of the sea from the Thracian coast to Antissa on Lesbos, where Terpander was born. Orpheus is, indeed, the singer whom Terpander was said to emulate, while Olympus was supposed to follow the models of Homer. Terpander was the first victor in the Spartan *Carneata* (festival in honor of Apollo), which began during the twenty-sixth Olympiad. This indicates his settling in Sparta, which is further confirmed by Plutarch, who in his *De musica* calls him the chief representative of the first period in which Sparta flourished musically. Plutarch also records the legend that he successfully subdued a revolt of the Lacedemonians by the power of his music. To us the most important item of Terpander's achieve-

* During the first auletic contest in connection with these festivals, which took place in 586 B. C., a certain Sakadas was awarded the victor's wreath for the performance of another *Nomos Pythicos,* composed by himself, which, from all accounts, may be looked upon as a sort of program music, describing the event in realistic manner.

ments is the addition of the eighth string to the lyre (*kithara*), thus completing the octave.

The next musician of extraordinary importance was Archilochos of Paraos, whose period has been fixed as 675-630. His popularity seems to have surpassed that of any other except Homer, with whom he was equal in the estimation of the ancients. His literary merit consists of the introduction into artistic poetry of the iambic and trochaic trimeter and tetrameter and the origination of the strophic form, by the alternation of shorter verses of different rhythm with longer ones. Similarly, his great *musical* achievement is the introduction of rhythmical change and the use of faster time. In using shorter measures he endowed his compositions with a certain folk-quality which, combined with the element of satire and fable, quickly brought them into popular favor. Archilochos was a pugnacious, combative character; he had taken part in the wars on Eubœa and found his death in a warlike exploit on Nasos. His invective and satirical poems were a totally new departure in Greek poetry. A peculiar practice, which in a sense survives in the method of our musical comedians, was introduced by Archilochos for humoristic effect, i. e., the interrupting of the song proper by the spoken word, followed by a return to the melody after a brief instrumental interlude. This was known as *paracataloge*. Its use was later transferred to the serious ode and even the tragedy. A reference in Plutarch to Archilochos' accompaniments 'under the vocal part, whereas the old ones sang everything in unison' has aroused considerable controversy. We shall dismiss it with the well-supported conclusion of Riemann, that it does not point to any form of heterophony, but to certain methods of interluding, rhythmical ornamentation and playing in the upper octave (flageolet).

The strophic forms of Archilochos constituted the

preliminary steps toward the development of lyric poetry, which, founded in the seventh century, 'raised its graceful structure in the sixth.' Alkman and Stesichoros furnish the transition to this subjective school, whose disciples are essentially the celebrants of love and wine. According to dialects it falls into three divisions—the Ionian, Dorian, and Æolian. The last, rooted in the kitharœdic school of Terpander, finds in its Lesbian home its first exponents—Alkaios and Sappho.

Alkaios (625-575 B. C.), son of a noble family of Mitylene, composed no less than ten books of sacred hymns and drinking, love, and war songs, in which the predominating note is the hate of tyranny and the joys of the banquet. His contemporary, Sappho, whose verses are likewise full of passion and pathos, takes flaming love as her theme, and a number of other Greek women poets of the sixth century follow her example. 'The poems of Alkaios and Sappho are the most melodious of Greek creations. . . . Their fluent strophes, so easily subjected to musical treatment, have not only in antiquity but throughout a series of centuries been regarded as a fixed form' (cf. the Odes of Horace). Ibykos and Anakreon, both living in the second half of the sixth century, belong to the same category. Both were wandering singers. The former is known to us through Schiller's poem perpetuating the legend of the cranes; the latter is still a byword for the joy of life and the praise of love, wine, and song.

A group of auletic musicians living in the seventh century, to which belonged Xenokritos, Polymnestos, and Thaletas, is credited with new developments in the musical practice of Sparta, which were soon transferred to the other Hellenic states as well. This great and far-reaching innovation was the introduction of the choral dances.

The cradle of the dance was said to be the island of Crete. Thence came Thaletas, the most important of the group of composers just mentioned. His fame reached the Spartans, who summoned him to organize a *Pæan* in honor of Apollo, in order to allay the pest,* and this inaugurated his extended activity in Sparta, where he introduced also the *pyrrhic* (πυῤῥίχη), a rapidly moving dance, and the *gymnopædia* (γυμνοπαιδία) festival dances performed annually in honor of those who fell at Thyrea. In the regular order of gymnastic dance education the last named were first, then came the *pyrrhics,* and finally the 'stage dances,' including the famous *hyporchemas*—pantomimic dances—which doubtless were a development in the direction of the drama.

According to a description of Athenæus the *gymnopædias* resembled the regular wrestling of the palæstra, for all the young boys danced naked and executed rhythmic body motions and responsive movements of the hands. The *pyrrhic,* which, according to Aristoxenus, was not an importation but of native Spartan origin, was a sort of war dance, which later, however, took on a bacchic character, rods and torches displacing the spears. It is recorded that marching songs, accompanied by rhythmic motions, were popular in Sparta from early times, and in the second Messenian war (685 B. C.) inspired the warriors to victory. The word *hyporchema,* defined as a pantomimic dance, 'in its narrowest sense signifies the pantomimic representation of the action described by the words' (Athenæus, i. 15). The same authority says that 'while the chorus danced, it sang' and that 'some of the hymns were danced and some were not, just as the Pæans were sung either with or without dancing.' Among

* The word Pæan (Gr. παίαν) originally signified physician. It was the name given to a choral address, usually of thanksgiving, to Apollo or Diana.

the hyporchemas are also included a great number of individual actions which made up the ceremonial of the great religious festivals and games, such as the gathering of the laurels for the victor, the garnering of the grapes, the bringing in of the tripod. To them belong also the so-called 'Prosodies,' sung to the accompaniment of the aulos during the processional into the temple or the approach to and withdrawal from the altar. All choral dancing was of course closely associated with music. And, while the monodic forms of composition continued to flourish, choral music came to stand highest in the public favor. The charm of variety afforded by a combination of the two was, moreover, quickly recognized.

The development of this choral music was the particular mission of a school of lyricists no less celebrated than the Æolian—namely, the Dorian. It was considered the highest form of lyricism. Larger periods and great variety, instead of short and regular strophes, distinguish its form, while its spiritual import is correspondingly broader. The *hymnæ* (bridal choruses); the *scolia* (praising a celebrated personality), out of which grew the encomium (song of praise), and the *epinikion*, sung in praise of the victors at the great festival games, are said to have introduced the softer, subjective, essentially lyrical element into the chorus. The dithyramb, originally a Bacchic festival song in honor of the god of wine (Dionysos), represents the highest of lyric choral forms. It originated in Phrygia, was developed artistically by Arion, living at the court of Periander in Corinth (628-585 B. C.), but was cultivated principally at Athens, first through Lasos of Hermione. Arion was the first to assemble a large chorus—50 men and boys—forming a circle around the altar of Dionysos, with a flute player in the centre. Before him Tyrtæus (685 B. C.) was said to have originated the division of the

chorus into three parts—'children, men, and old men' —but earlier than that we learn from Pollux of the partition of the chorus into two semi-choirs, which sang in responsive or antiphonary manner.

Simonides of Keos and Pindar are the chief figures of choral lyricism. The former, born on the isle of Keos (Ionia), lived first at the court of Hipparch in Athens, after whose assassination he went to Thessaly. After the battle of Marathon (490) he reappeared at Athens with an elegy upon the fallen warriors, which left him victor over Æschylus, the founder of the drama. He also won the dithyrambic contest in 471, and he died at the court of Hierons of Syracuse. The reproach of commercialism, made against Simonides because of his acceptance of favors and pay at the hand of rulers, reminds one of present-day criticism. In contrast to him, Pindar (522-448), the illustrious master, revered not less than Homer himself, was a retiring personality, 'living for himself rather than others.' He was born at Thebes. His life story has been embellished with legend and fiction, indicating the nation's affection for him. He participated frequently in the national festivals and, it is related, found his death on the stage of the theatre at Argos. His works combine no less than seventeen books containing hymns, pæans, dithyrambs, *parthenias, hyporchemas,* encomiums, *thernoi epinikia,* and other forms, all intended for choral performance. His first Pythic ode is among the six fragments of Greek music preserved to us.

We must now consider what is perhaps the greatest and the most original creation of the Greek mind—the drama. Its forms we have seen in lyric poetry and in pantomimic dances of the chorus, furnishing the elements of dialogue and representative action. These forms are to be found independently among other nations of antiquity, but their combination is peculiar

to the Greeks, to whom the entire world is indebted for the art of the theatre. Like the dithyrambic chorus, whose close connection with the worship of Dionysos we have observed, the drama was perpetually associated with these bacchic festivals. The very name tragedy (from τραγός = goat) indicates its root form—the satyr play, executed by men disguised with fur skin and the cloven hoof to represent the votaries of the God. Here is added another element of the drama—impersonation—though earlier cases of it are seen, for instance, in the disguise of the poet Chrysothemis as the god Apollo, when performing his compositions. Allegory and symbolism were things to which the Greek mind naturally inclined. Mythological conceptions were often visualized, such as the favorite fight of Apollo and the dragon, the myth of Demeter and Persephone represented in the Eleusinian mysteries, etc. The word δραν is the general expression for secret action in the Pagan cult, hence in the antique drama, no less than our own opera, we may recognize a sacred origin (cf. Chap. XI, p. 325). The dithyrambic chorus, whose members themselves are thought to have been disguised as satyrs, furnished the last preparatory step leading to the tragedy, which, it should be noted, gradually developed out of the non-choral sections, the solo speeches of the leaders.* Similarly, the Comedy had its beginning in the rather coarse witticisms of the choral leaders in the Bacchic processions of the Dionysos festival (cf. Aristotle, 'Poetics,' 4).

The first real dramatist was Thespis, who, in 536 B. C., was summoned to Athens by the Pisistratides to produce a tragedy in which for the first time there appeared an actor outside of the chorus. It developed

* Dithyrambic composition continued, of course, to flourish beside the drama, as did also the writing of nomes, but both were corrupted by the introduction of solo interpolations (in the case of the former) and choral numbers (in the latter), so that they finally approached each other in a sort of cantata form.

rapidly from then on—we need only mention the introduction of the comedy by Epicharmos (540-450) and its official sanctioning in Athens in 487. Phrynichos, the greatest dramatist before Æschylus, is remembered by the performance of the 'Fall of Milet' for which, because it reminded the Athenians of their defeat, he was punished, and the political tragedy henceforth forbidden. The names of the three greatest tragic poets, Æschylus (525-456), Sophocles (496-406), and Euripides (450-395), are too well known to require comment. Our present task is simply to point out the important part which music played in their works. The parallel frequently drawn between the modern opera or music drama on the one hand, and the classic tragedy on the other, we may dismiss with the statement of Riemann, that 'the classic tragedy was a drama in which music as such coöperated, while in the modern (music drama) music occupies an eminently dominating place.' We might add that, whereas we speak, for instance, of Wagner as being his own librettist, we might say of Euripides that he supplied his own music for his drama.

The three elements of modern opera—soloists, chorus, and orchestra—were, indeed, represented in the classic drama. The soloists were the actors (who *sang* most of their speeches) and the chorus leader with his assistants, who were sometimes drafted to the stage proper, to take part in the action. The chorus consisted of fifteen members in the tragedy, twenty-four in the comedy. It was placed on a lower eminence than the principals (on the 'orchestra') and represented at first (with Æschylus and Sophocles) the 'moral consciousness of the people.' Later, with Euripides, its contemplative function was superseded by its actual participation in the action as a mob. It sang together —or *tutti,* as we would say—the *parados* and *aphodos,* the processional and recessional choruses—for which

the chorus was sometimes divided into sections, appearing one after the other, as, for instance, in the 'Seven against Thebes,' and the *stasima,* interspersed through the action. The choral dance of the tragedy, festive and stately, was called *emmeleia;* that of the satyr play, grotesque and rapid, the *sikinnis,* and the lampooning, lascivious dance of the comedy, *cordax.* The 'orchestra' consisted of one simple flute player, who used the double *aulos.* This was traditionally the characteristic 'orgiastic' instrument. The kithara, despite its popularity in other uses, was never admitted to the tragedy. The chief function of the flute may have been to keep the chorus 'in tune,' but it is certain that it played interludes, etc., and at times solo numbers, for we know that aulos playing had become a highly developed technical practice, and that aulos virtuosi achieved great reputations and were highly esteemed.

This leads us to the question of instrumental practice in general, the brief consideration of which is our next task.

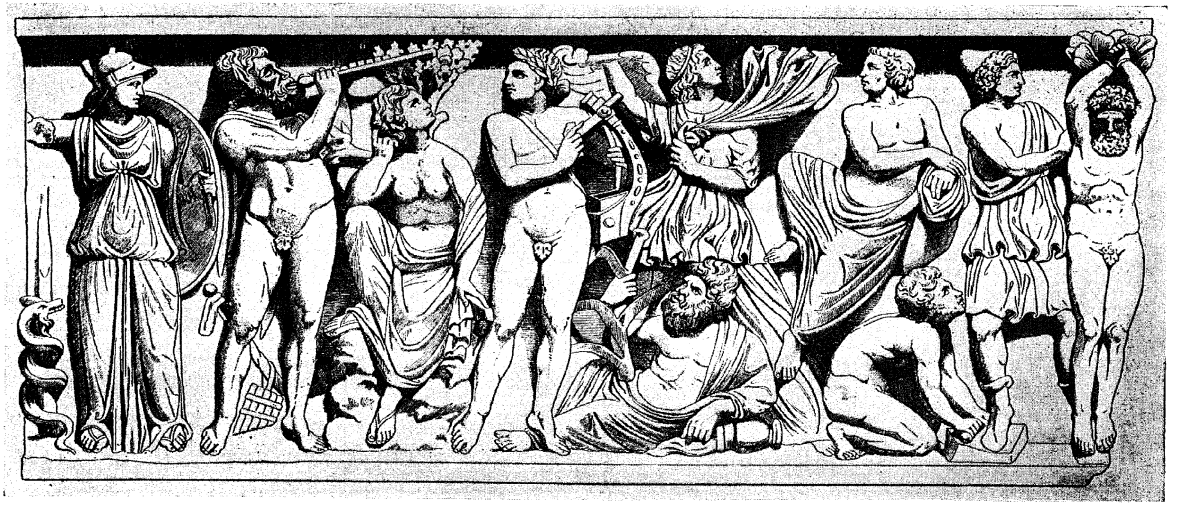
VI

One of the most ancient musical controversies was that regarding the respective merits of wind and string instruments. How it resulted in a most important victory for the latter is revealed in the partly mythical story of Marsyas, a Phrygian satyr. According to this legend Marsyas found upon the banks of a stream a flute, probably the double flute, which Athena had thrown away because she feared that blowing upon it would injure her beauty. Being a satyr, and therefore not so sensitive upon the point of personal attractions as the goddess, Marsyas set himself to learn the use of the instrument, and, in course of time, grew

so proficient that he challenged Apollo to a contest, the god to use the lyre, the satyr the pipe. Apollo played a simple melody, but Marsyas, following, executed a number of variations upon this tune which compelled the judge to admit that in the first test victory belonged to the satyr. Apollo then played again, accompanying himself with the voice, and this Marsyas could not surpass; he objected, however, on the ground that the voice and the lyre were two instruments, while he was using only one. Apollo retorted that Marsyas used both mouth and fingers for his pipe, hence he had the right to use his mouth as well. The judges agreed with Apollo and the second test was awarded to the god. But when the third test came Apollo scorned to use the voice, and burst out in such a strain of melody as even Mount Olympus had never heard before, the music of the immortals which no satyr could hope to compass. Marsyas was flayed alive by Apollo as a sufficient declaration of his defeat.

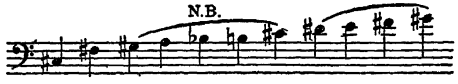
Thus the myth. It has its reflection in fact. For the ancient national music of the lyre prevailed in Greece over the foreign Phrygian double flute and the latter was regarded as a barbarian instrument, finding its place only in vintage festivals, bacchanalian orgies, and, finally, into the chorus of the tragic drama.

The lyre and the aulos, then, are the arch-types of the two great classes of instruments—string and wind —which the Greeks used. That there were a great number of varieties we gather from their representation on monuments, vases, etc., and from the writings of classic authors. Taking the string instruments as the oldest—for mythical references to these go farthest back into antiquity—we find first the lyre, and then its more graceful sister, the *kithara* (or *phorminx*), which were in common use in the north, on the islands and the coast of Asia Minor. The lyre, originally made of the shell of a tortoise, had an arched soundbox, while



the kithara's was flat; the latter's body was larger and more angular in shape. Both had originally four, subsequently seven, strings, which were added to in later periods till eleven was reached. These were fastened in a base at the lower end of the instrument and ran across a 'bridge' to the cross-piece connecting the two arms, which acted also as tuning peg. The sounding board had in the centre a resonance opening.

The Asiatic form of kithara became popular throughout Greece as a consequence of the work of Terpander's school and attained the leading rank as the Greek concert instrument, employed by professional players exclusively, while the primitive lyre was relegated to the use of amateurs and domestic purposes. With its full complement of strings music in all the modes could be played upon it without especially tuning the individual strings. The relative pitch of the string was based on the Dorian mode in the middle octave (e to e'), but for greater brilliancy of effect virtuosi preferred the higher transpositions, so that finally the instrument was accordingly tuned as follows:



By special technical practice the higher octave (flageolet) could also be produced. The manner of playing was probably as follows: The left arm held the instrument close to the body by means of a sling, while the right, by means of a plectrum with arrow-shaped ends, plucked the strings from the outside. This left the fingers of the left hand free to touch the strings from the body side. It is thought that this was done as accompaniment (in unison) to the voice, while the right played the solo selections, interludes, etc.

Most prominent among other forms of string instru-

ments was the *magadis,* a larger harp-like instrument with twenty strings, which was played without plectrum, and, if we read ancient writers correctly, in octaves.* Likewise the *barbiton* (similar to the *kithara*), the harp-like *pectis, simikion,* and *epigoneion,* and the lute-like *pandura* and *nabla* (of archaic origin), were played without plectrum, as indeed the lyre and kithara were also played in earliest times. The harp, though known to the Greeks, was not used by them. There only remains to mention the monochord, an instrument of one string stretched over a soundbox, which could be arbitrarily divided by a movable 'bridge.' It was used purely for experimental purposes, as we have already seen. Later it was constructed with several strings in order to demonstrate the consonance of intervals; in modern times it became the basis from which the clavichord, and finally the piano, was evolved.

The chief Greek *wind* instrument, as already indicated, was the *aulos,* or flute—not, however, a flute in the modern sense, but a reed instrument resembling an oboe, and having a double reed. It was often used in pairs, of equal intonation, but of different size, the larger instrument playing the soli, the smaller the accompaniment. The aulos had as many as fifteen or sixteen holes, but not sufficient to produce all the chromatic degrees of the scale, which, as well as the different *genera,* were produced by half stops and similar technical manipulations. There were also rings attached near the holes, by the turning of which the pitch could be altered. Overblowing was also practised, by means of a small hole (syrinx) near the mouthpiece. There was a whole family of *auloi* corresponding to the varying ranges of the human voice. The entire compass from the lowest note of the bass aulos to the highest of the soprano was three octaves. It is recorded

* Hence the expression 'magadizing' for singing in octaves.

that *auloi* were tuned differently according to the various modes, and that players were usually equipped with an entire set of seven.

Other wind instruments used by the Greeks were the Libyan flute (played sideways), the *elymos*, and the *syrinx*—the familiar 'pipes of Pan'—consisting of a number of rush reeds of different lengths fastened together with wax. Trumpets, straight (*sapinx*) and crooked horn-like (*keras*), were also common as instruments of war and priestly ceremony. The former variety even attained the rank of a contest (agonistic) instrument. A female exponent of Sapinx playing is recorded in the person of Aglais, the daughter of Megalocles.

* * * * * * *

A few words will suffice to indicate the nature of Greek musical notation. Instrumental notation differed from vocal and was of earlier origin. Characters of archaic form (Phœnician) were used to indicate the notes, though not in a definite alphabetic order. They are also used in inverted or distorted forms to indicate minute variations, i. e., the three notes of a Pyknon (the short step of the tetrachord) were indicated by a certain sign in different positions, thus: ⌐, ∟, and ¬. In vocal notation the regular Greek alphabet was employed from Α to Ω to represent the notes of the middle octave (including every step necessary to the production of the various modes and *genera*. The higher octave was indicated by an '*octava* sign.'

Rhythm was usually not noted, being determined by the metre of the verse, but a code which determined the proportion of sound duration was sometimes used. The norm or unit in that system was denoted by the absence of any sign, its double by —, its triple by ⌟, quadruple by ⌞, and quintuple by ⌞⌟. Rests were indicated thus: ⋀. All of these signs were, like our

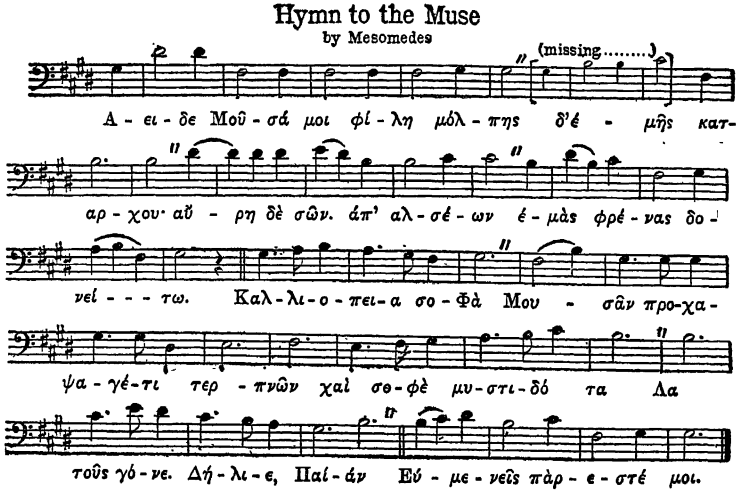
modern notes, set *over the text.* While the system was thoroughly worked out in its technical details, its cumbersomeness would suggest that in practice it was of less use than in theoretical exposition. No wonder, then, that few compositions were, as far as we know, actually written down, and of those only six are preserved to us. These are as follows:

1. The beginning of the first Pythic ode of Pindar.
2. Three hymns of Mesomedes ('To the Muse,' 'To Helios,' and 'To Nemesis') discovered by Vincenzo Galilei (see Chap. IX).
3. Some small instrumental exercises, analyzed by Bellermann (1841).
4. The Epitaph of Seikilos (discovered 1883).
5. Two complete Apollo Hymns of the second century B. C., found chiselled in stone in the Athenian treasury at Delphi.
6. A Fragment of the first *Stasimon* from Euripides' 'Orestes' (found 1892).

The Hymn to the Muse by Mesomedes (No. 2) is reproduced at the end of this article.

This necessarily brief sketch will have acquainted the reader with the most salient facts concerning Greek music—lost as an art, but perpetuated as a science. Many volumes have been written upon the subject, but much more than these facts cannot possibly be adduced except by long and arduous study. For our present purpose may it suffice to convey to the reader that here for the first time music has attained the dignity of an art, with all its æsthetic, emotional and moral significance, with its complicated theory, its sophisticated technique, consciously employed to give pleasure and to uplift the mind of man. Mechanical limitations and peculiar conditions prevented the development of this art in the modern sense, but its theory has without doubt given a definite direction to modern music. Not only the musical teaching of the early church fathers, but the speculations of theorists down to comparatively

modern times, and the principles of the Renaissance masters were based on those of the Greeks, however much misunderstood. Perhaps it is not out of place to recall, in conclusion, how modern composers have been inspired by the stories of classic antiquity and beguiled by the music of Greek poetry. Modern music,



disconnected from all that may have been the music of the older nations of antiquity, is a lineal descendant of the music of the Greeks.

C. S.

CHAPTER V

THE AGE OF PLAIN-SONG

Music in the Roman empire—Sources of early Christian music; the hymns of St. Ambrose—Hebrew traditions—Psalmody, responses, antiphons; the liturgy; the Gregorian tradition; the antiphonary and the gradual; sequences and tropes—Ecclesiastical modes; early notation.

I

FROM the point of view of the musical historian the dominant note of civilization at the opening of the Christian era was the all-pervading influence of Hellenistic culture. It is well to remember, however, that this influence was more in form than in content. Greek art was no longer the pure, bright flame that lighted the world so gloriously in the age of Pericles. Its blaze had become dull and lifeless; elements foreign to the fuel that had fed it in the classic age had been brought to it by the softly sensuous fingers of the Orient and the rough, unsympathetic hands of Rome. Hellenic art at the opening of the Christian era resembled that of Periclean Athens as little as the pseudo-classic architecture of the Italian Renaissance resembled the crowning glories of the Acropolis. The serene, clear, intellectual æstheticism of Greece had degenerated into the coarse sensuality of the pagan Latins and the sterile dilettantism of the theistic peoples of the Orient. Neither Latins nor Orientals were at all capable of understanding or assimilating it. Its joyous, essentially Aryan paganism was as foreign to the Semitic temperament as its lucid intellectuality was impossible to the turgid Roman mind.

We have then at the beginning of the Christian era a veneer of Greek culture covering a gross materialism in the West and a decadent, mystic symbolism in the East. Into this situation was born the new cult with its utter negation of everything the ancient world, pagan or theistic, held precious. Christianity from the beginning was at war with its environment—Greek, Roman, and Hebraic. Though its roots lay in Jewish philosophy, its pessimistic attitude toward the world, its view of life as an evil, poisoned condition, was directly opposed to the spirit of a people with whom, as Renan says, 'the evils of life were never chronic complaints' (*'pour qui les maux de la vie ne deviennent pas des maladies chroniques'*). Its opposition to all the teachings and practices of paganism was, of course, absolute and uncompromising.

Nevertheless, Christianity absorbed from its environment the material of its ritual as inevitably as the tree draws nurture from the soil and atmosphere that underlies and surrounds it. That it absorbed those elements unconsciously, even unwillingly, goes a long way to explain our ignorance of the manner in which the liturgical music of the Church developed. It seems practically certain that among the most devout early Christians music was looked upon with suspicion, and its use, especially in connection with the worship of God, was probably discouraged as far as possible. Even as late as the fourth century we find a Syrian monk warning one of his brethren that we should approach God with sighs and tears, with reverence and humility, and not with song. When, through the inevitable pressure of environment, music had become an integral part of the Christian ritual, the Church fathers, with characteristic *naïveté*, completely ignored the source from which it was drawn, and, in what is obviously simple faith, attributed to it a divine origin. 'Our singing,' says St. John Chrysostom, 'is only an echo, an

imitation of that of the angels. Music was invented in heaven. Around and above us sing the angels. If man is musical it is by a revelation of the Holy Ghost; the singer is inspired from on high.' St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, Justin Martyr, St. Basil, St. Benedict, and other early fathers talk in the same strain. John de Muris, more historical and less mystical, can find no more definite origin for liturgical music than a vague tradition.*

With those who were practically eye-witnesses to the growth of early Church music so serenely blind to the influences that determined its course, the task of the modern historian in reconstructing those influences becomes practically impossible. If, however, we understand clearly the conditions under which liturgical music took shape we can formulate a theoretical sketch of its history, which is probably not far from the truth. In this connection it will help us considerably if we remember that during the early centuries of the Christian era the Roman church was far from being the dominant and unifying factor which it later became, and that the great institution to which we are wont to refer simply as 'the church' resulted from the confluence of many independent streams, and not from the expansion of any single one. These streams were divided, so to speak, between two main watersheds, one of which was Asia Minor and the other Italy. In Asia Minor the church was surrounded by a Semitic civilization shot through with Hellenic elements; in Italy it grew up in an environment of Græco-Roman culture.

It might be well to take a glance here at the state of music in Rome at the beginning of the Christian era. Roman music previous to the conquest of Greece

* 'Auctoritatem . . . in Ecclesia cantandi causa devotionis traxit a canta religiosorum antiquorum tam in novo quam in vetere testamento.'—John de Muris, *Sum. Mas.*

(146 B. C.) had borrowed its forms from the Etruscans and the Greeks. Etruscan influences were probably predominant in the early centuries of the Republic.* The nature of these influences is not known to us. It would seem that the Etruscans were originally a Greek race, and the fountain-head of their musical art was consequently Hellenic. But they were, as their vases show, a race dowered with artistic ideals and genuine creative impulses, and they must have modelled their musical inheritance into something new, characteristic, and beautiful. But, if we are to believe Dionysius, Strabo, and other Roman writers who have touched on the subject, we must conclude that the Romans merely imitated such music of the Etruscans as was useful for religious and military purposes, choosing, presumably, the cruder forms of the art. We may accept this conclusion all the more readily since we know that the Romans, even down to Imperial times, remained obtuse and obtrusive Philistines.

It does not seem that the Romans borrowed much directly from Greece until after Greece became a Roman province. They were not, in fact, interested at all in art. But, after repeated conquests had made them rich and luxurious, they began to cultivate—or rather patronize—art as a sort of fashionable and expensive luxury. The result was a gradual growth, among the leisure classes in Rome, of a very real literary and æsthetic taste. By the time of Augustus Rome was able to produce such excellent imitators of Greek models as Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Catullus. In music, however, the imperial people never rose so high. Hellenic music had already degenerated when Rome fell under its influence. 'Besides pantomime with chorus,' says Gevaert, 'Greek musicians brought to Rome only the instrumental solo and the song with kithara or lyre ac-

* Cf. Strabo, *De Bello Punico*, Livy, Bk. xxxix.

companiment.' * This branch of the art flourished apace in Rome, where, however, like Italian opera in later centuries, it became distorted into a craze for meaningless virtuosity. We know less about the music itself than we know about the famous kithara players who were the favorites of emperors and were accorded the honors and dignity of princes. History speaks to us about Tigellius, the friend of Augustus, and Mesomedes, of Crete, the intimate of Hadrian. Nero gained a humorous immortality by his pretensions as a singer and kithara player. The story of his journey through Greece, where he won the kithara prize at the Olympic games and defeated in public competition the most famous performers in every city he visited, is surely one of the most ludicrous narratives in all history.

Until the third century A. D. the kitharœdic chant was purely Hellenic, as we might surmise from the names of its most famous exponents, such as Terpnos, Menecrates, Diodorus, Chrysogones, Pollion, Echion, and Glaphyros. In the second century Ptolemy, writing his 'Harmonics,' founded his system of tones and modes on the practice of the kithara and lyre players.† Practically all of the pieces which have come down to us from the Græco-Roman period, and which we have noted in the last chapter, belong to the literature of the kithara. The kitharœdic chants were narratives in the style of Timotheus, or lyrics, chiefly hymns to some divinity. These compositions were not in strophic form. The melody was divided into sections of unequal length (*commata*) and varied more or less from one end of the poem to the other. Until the beginning of the fourth century the texts were usually in Greek. The Latin kitharœdic songs, such as those of Horace and Catullus, were scarcely heard except at banquets and private reunions. Greek was, indeed, the prevail-

* Fr. Aug. Gevaert: *La Mélopée antique dans le chant de l'église latine.*
† See Bellermann and Vincent: *Anonymi scriptio de musica,* Berlin, 1841.

ing musical language, as we may learn from Vitruvius, who prefaces to the chapter on music in his work on Architecture a warning that musical theory is practically a sealed book to those who do not know Greek.* After the removal of the seat of empire to Byzantium in 330 A. D., the use of Greek disappeared, and with it the use of musical notation by means of Greek letters. The transmission of music then became oral and the art of the kithara song and its accompaniments gradually vanished.†

II

Now the founders of Christianity were Jews, and Oriental influences were never absent from the church, even in Rome. Furthermore the apostles of Christianity in Rome were humble, untutored men, and the majority of their converts were drawn from the same class —the class which in all ages has naturally taken refuge in any creed which contradicts the views and practices of its masters and oppressors. Christ's message of hope to the humble in spirit came home first to the humble in material possessions. *'Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.'* For three centuries the Christians in Italy were subjected to constant oppression and often to fiercely violent persecution. Their rites were performed in dark and secret places and, presumably, without any noise that could be avoided. Under the circumstances one is tempted to conclude that music was severely ignored by the first Christians in Rome. They had every reason to avoid it. It was likely to attract undesirable attention; it was associated primarily in their minds with the sensual orgies of their

* Book v, Chap. 4.

† For a fuller discussion of Græco-Roman music see Fr. Aug. Gevaert, *La mélopée antique dans le chant de l'église latine* (Ghent, 1895); Combarieu, *Histoire de la musique*, Vol. I, Chap. XIII (Paris, 1913); Charles Burney, 'History of Music,' Vol. I.

pagan oppressors, and, finally, the first Christians themselves were not of the class likely to possess much musical culture. Nevertheless, it is practically certain that they intoned some of their services in a simple, discreet way. They must have chanted their psalms, at least, probably as the Hebrews did. This chant, it would perhaps be safe to assume, was responsorial and consisted of a low, more or less monotonous, recitative.

By the time the Edict of Milan (313 A. D.) struck off the fetters that bound Christianity the Church had already gathered to her bosom many of the most influential and cultured Roman citizens. Their advent must have changed gradually the whole complexion of the Roman church. With their cultivated taste for art they probably furnished the prime impulse toward the æstheticism which gradually came to be a distinguishing feature of the church ritual. After the Edict of Milan the church jumped almost at a bound to a position of social and political influence which soon became one of social and political predominance. The most influential of its members no longer came from the lowly and oppressed, but from the rich and powerful. Every reason that had operated against the use of music in the primitive church had disappeared, and with it had disappeared for a time the Oriental tendencies which the founders of the church had consciously or unconsciously incorporated with it. There is little doubt that during the third and fourth centuries Græco-Roman culture penetrated to the innermost shrine of Western Christianity and remained an active agent in the formulation of liturgical music long after the Orient had again become a predominant influence through the removal of the seat of empire to Byzantium.

It is unfortunately not within our power to indicate the point at which the Græco-Roman kitharœdic chant began to influence Christian religious music, nor do the relative proportions of a general history permit us

to study the question here. However, it is sufficient for us to know that the kitharœdic chant was the direct ancestor of the Christian hymnody in the West. 'Among various kinds of pieces of which the Roman antiphonary is composed,' says Gevaert, 'none is known by literary documents to be so old as the strophic hymnody; from the musical point of view it marks the transition from the vocal melopæia of antiquity to the liturgical chant properly so called.' We find this transition fully accomplished in the hymns of St. Ambrose (d. 397), who is unquestionably the most striking and influential figure in early liturgical music. Gevaert aptly calls him the 'Terpander of Western Christianity.' His works are full of reference to music, many of which are naïvely charming. For example, he writes: 'The angels praise the Lord, the powers of heaven sing psalms unto him, and even before the very beginning of the world the cherubim and seraphim sang with sweet voice Holy, Holy, Holy!' He mentions the music of the spheres and recalls that it has been said the axle of heaven itself turned with a perpetual sweet sound that might be heard in the uttermost parts of the earth where there are certain secrets of Nature; that the wild beasts and birds might he soothed with the delight of voices blending. Even more practical, he points out that those things we wish well to remember we are accustomed to sing, for that which is sung stays the better in our memories. His hymns produced a great effect upon St. Augustine, who wrote of them in his 'Confessions' in terms almost extravagant; and a whole century later Cassiodorus constantly cites St. Ambrose and bears witness to the wide and everlasting nature of his influence on Christian hymnody.

Six hymns which have come down to us are attributed with certainty to this gifted saint. They are the *Deus creator omnium, Jam surgit hora tertia, Æterne rerum conditor, Veni redemptor gentium, Illuxit orbi*

jam dies, and *Bis ternas horas explicans.* Probably also he was the author of *O lux beata Trinitas, His est dies verus Dei, Splendor paternæ gloriæ,* and *Æterna Christi munera.* The melodic forms of these hymns are borrowed directly from the Greeks and Romans. Stripped of their melismas their primitive contours are easily recognizable, and their structure is thoroughly in accord with the modal theory of the classic Greeks. All of these hymns which seem to be the most ancient belong to one of the principal kitharœdic modes—the Dorian, Iastian, or Æolian. The Ambrosian hymns in the Dorian mode have the same melodic texture as the hymn to Helios and the main part of the song to the Muse (see pp. 126-127 above). Hymns after the manner of Ambrose in the Iastian and Æolian modes are frequent in the Catholic hymnody.*

The Græco-Roman complexion of the Ambrosian hymns is still further evident in their metrical form. 'The old ecclesiastical hymns composed in iambic dimeters and ascribed to Bishop Ambrose,' says Riemann, 'are still firmly founded upon the antique art, as they respect absolutely the quantity of the syllables and introduce long syllables and short ones only where it is in accordance with the laws of classic poetry.' † The eight syllable iambi of the Ambrosian verse became extremely popular in ecclesiastical hymnody, and the Breviary, as it is to-day, contains many hymns in that measure. But this was not the only metrical form of classic Rome that became incorporated in the liturgy of the Church. Vanantius Fortunatus in the sixth century introduced the trochaic tetrameter, which was a favorite popular verse among the ancient Romans, and still survives in the rhythm of the Roman *saltarello* and the Neapolitan *tarantella.* The elegant Sapphic strophe, so dear to Latin lyricists, made its appearance subse-

* *See* Gevaert: *Op. cit.*

† Hugo Riemann: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte,* I ².

quent to the Carlovingian epoch. As long as Latin prosody remained dominant the ecclesiastical hymns were more or less metrical, but as literary Latin passed into desuetude these chants lost their isochronous rhythm. At the beginning of the eighth century the vogue of metrical verse had already passed. With it passed, too, the classic melopæia which had gradually become enriched by accessory inflexions.*

There was quite a large school of hymn writers in the Ambrosian style, among whom may be mentioned especially St. Augustine (350-430), St. Paulinus of Nola (*ca.* 431), the Spanish poet Prudentius (fourth century),† Sedulius (fifth century), Ennodius and Venantius Fortunatus (sixth century). The style spread rapidly from Milan into the different western provinces of the Roman empire. A text of the time of Sidonius Apollinaris (second half of the fifth century) tells us that at the feast of Christmas all the churches of Gaul and Italy resounded to the hymn *Veni creator gentium,* and Rhabanus Maurus, bishop of Mayence in the middle of the ninth century, tells us that the Ambrosian hymns were then in use in all the churches of the West.‡ Further proof of their wide prevalence is furnished by the rules of St. Benedict and Aurelian of Arles (first half of sixth century). For many centuries, however, they were frowned upon by Rome. The Council of Braga (563) expressly excluded from the divine office all chants in verse and all texts not taken from the sacred scriptures. Three centuries later the deacon Amalarius, charged by Louis the Pious with regulating the chants of the office for all the churches of the Frankish empire, leaves hymns completely aside

* For a detailed discussion of the metrical forms of ecclesiastical hymnody see Riemann: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte,* I².

† Prudentius was the author of two collections of hymns, the *Kathemerinon* and the *Peristephanon,* which were first adopted by the Spanish church and later introduced to Rome.

‡ *De init. cler.,* in Migne, *Patr. Lat.,* cvii, 362.

in conformity with the usage of Rome at that time. In fact, the local rite of Rome had not yet welcomed hymns as late as the beginning of the twelfth century.

III

Priority is given to the Ambrosian hymns in this discussion, not because they are the most ancient forms of liturgical chant, but because they form the most easily demarcable point of transition from Græco-Roman music to Christian ecclesiastical music. The most ancient forms of the liturgy undoubtedly had their genesis in the Orient. There, of course, the influence of Greek music was also active, though to what extent it affected the Hebrew traditions we cannot even surmise. We find, too, the vogue of the kitharœdic chant even greater among the Roman citizens of the Orient than among the inhabitants of Italy. The former carried their passion for this form of expression to the extent of engraving the songs with their melodies on funeral monuments. It may again be remarked, however, that the first Christians were not of the class likely to be influenced easily by extraneous culture. Acquainted with foreign music they undoubtedly were. The apostles, for instance, speak of the Greek 'zither' as a familiar instrument.* But this acquaintance was in all probability superficial. Humble and uneducated for the most part, those pioneers of a new cult were of the sort with whom custom and tradition die hard. They were reared in the atmosphere of the synagogue; and it must be remembered that they were not iconoclasts of the Hebrew faith, but rather professed reformers and purifiers of it. The Temple of Solomon, the Ark of the Covenant, the patriarchs and prophets were subjects as sacred to them as they were to older generations of the children of Israel. Their quarrel was not with the

* See Paul I; Cor. xiv.7; John Apocal., v.8, xiv.2, xv.2.

Jews, but with such Jews as refused to recognize their new king. While, therefore, they had every reason for avoiding the music of the Pagan Greeks and Romans, they had no reason whatever for abandoning that which had been handed down to them from David. They certainly took over the texts of the Old Testament psalmody, and it is a natural assumption that with them they adopted the music to which these texts were sung. We may conjecture with some plausibility that the psalmodic solo, responsorial chant, and antiphonal chant—all ancient Hebrew liturgical forms—passed directly from the Temple and Synagogue into the first Christian communities, with such minor changes as may have been necessitated by the new ritual and attendant upon the transference of its conduct from trained cantors to untrained laymen.

The psalmodic solo has no special significance in the development of the Christian liturgy. Of more importance is the responsorial chant, which consists of a solo interrupted periodically by the voice of the people.* It is very probable that this form of psalmody was in use among the first Christians, though we have no direct evidence on the point. We learn, however, from church historians that psalms were sung in this fashion at Alexandria in the time of Bishop Athanasius in the early part of the fourth century. The antiphonal chant, which is the most interesting and important of liturgical forms, is of extreme antiquity. David, we know, divided the singers of the Temple into two choirs. Whether this form passed directly and without interruption from the Temple and Synagogue into the religious services of the first Christians we have no means of knowing. It was, however, adopted at a very early date by Christian communities in the Orient. Eusebius, bishop of Cesarea (third century) repro-

* A typical example is the recurrence of the phrase 'Quoniam in æternum misericordia ejus' in the 135th psalm.

duces a text of Philo in which occurs the following description: 'Suddenly all rose on both sides . . . and formed two choirs, men and women. Each choir chose its coryphee and soloist . . . then they sang to God hymns of different melodies and metres, sometimes together and sometimes answering each other in suitable manner.' As showing the early expansion of this style of singing throughout the Christian world we may quote from a letter of St. Basil (fourth century) to the inhabitants of Nova Cesarea. 'The people rise in the night,' he writes, 'and go to the house of prayer; when they have prayed they pass to the psalms. Sometimes they divide into two alternate parts, sometimes a soloist sings and all answer; and having thus passed the night in divers psalms they intone all together, as one voice and one heart, the penitential psalm. . . . If it is for this reason [the organization of the psalmody] you wish to separate from me you must also separate from the Egyptians and Lybians, from the inhabitants of Thebes, Palestine, Arabia, Phœnicia, Syria, and the banks of the Euphrates—in a word, from all those who hold in honor vigils and psalms performed in common.' It may be remarked that the antiphon originally was merely the alternate singing of two choirs. Later it came to mean the solo refrain intoned by the high priest before the biblical psalm or canticle and repeated by the choir when the psalm or canticle is finished. According to the rules of St. Benedict this solo refrain was intended to give (*imponere*) the melody to the singers. Musically, says Gevaert, it forms the introduction and finale of the psalmodic chant to which it is bound by a community of mode. It probably took the place of an earlier instrumental introduction and finale, as, for some reason or reasons upon which it is idle to speculate, instruments were excluded from the services of the primitive church.

It was in the monasteries of the East, of Syria and

Egypt, that the forms of the liturgy first began to take shape, and in Antioch and Alexandria there developed schools of singing which were to the Greek churches of the East what the *schola cantorum* was to the Latin churches of the seventh and eighth centuries. In the fourth century, as we may gather from the canons of the council of Laodicea, they had already trained singers in the churches of Syria, and St. Augustine speaks of the singing of St. Athanasius as if the latter must have had a careful schooling in the art. Silvia, the Gallic pilgrim, mentions the singing of antiphons and psalms in the church at Alexandria (385-88). In the fifth century, as we learn from a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris, Syrian cantors were used in Italian churches.

The prejudice against Pagan music, which must have excluded all Greek or Græco-Roman influences from the Christian services of apostolic times, proved hard to kill. We find it cropping out even in Clement of Alexandria, who admits only 'modest and decent harmonies' and excludes harmonies that are 'chromatic and light, such as are used in the lascivious orgies of courtesans.' By that time, however, the prejudice apparently had become discriminating. The extraordinary popularity of the kitharœdic songs was bound to have its influence. The heresiarchs were not slow to recognize the hold of profane melodies on the people, and composed dogmatic chants to the melodies of popular songs, much in the manner of the Salvation Army of our day. Arius, for instance, the great heresiarch who was condemned by the council of Nicea (325), reproduced in his *Thalia* the lascivious musical forms of the Ionian Sotades—to the great scandal of Athanasius. St. Ephraem (320-79), adopting the same idea, turned the Syrians from the songs of Harmonius by writing hymns in the Syrian language on the same melodies, and Gregory of Nazianza (328-89) composed canticles

to take the place of the heterodox psalms of the Apollinarists.

While probably there was never any break in the communication between the churches of the East and those of the West, it is likely that they developed their liturgical forms more or less independently until about the middle of the fourth century. Then the floodgates of Oriental influence seem to have been opened by St. Hilarius and St. Ambrose. The former, who was bishop of Poitiers, is said to have introduced into his church the antiphonal and other forms of psalmody then practised in the churches of Asia, where he had lived in exile for four years (356-60). He is supposed to have introduced the Syrian hymnody into the Western Church. *'Hymnorum carmine floruit primus,'* Isidor of Seville said of him. He is credited with having been the pioneer of the metrical style of hymn known as Ambrosian, though the three hymns from his pen which have been preserved hardly bear out this contention. They are crude in rhythm and not likely to have served as models for the cultured Ambrose. From all available evidence one is impelled to award to St. Ambrose the honor of having first introduced antiphonal psalmody to the West.* Indeed there is little doubt that he was the real founder of the Latin chant in general. Ecclesiastical songs, as we have already seen, had already developed, both in the East and in the West, to

* Gerbert says of him: 'Illud sacrorum hymnorum in Ecclesia genus, quod antiquissimus in Ecclesiæ temporibus in usu fuit, in Oriente præsertim a S. Ephrem, inter Latinos a S. Ambrosio excultum, unde et Ambrosiani dicti sunt hymni . . . non cantum alternum, vel populi concentum primu(s) indux(it) in ecclesiam Mediolanensem S. Ambrosinus, sed cantum modulatum antea insuetum in ecclesia occidentali.'—*De Cantu et Musica Sacra,* I, p. 199. The writings of the Fathers are full of fugitive, grateful references to the musical achievements of Ambrose. Nor is his fame based on tradition, as in the case of St. Gregory. Some of his most devoted admirers are near contemporaries. The references to his work are not usually inspired by a clear understanding of just what he did for church music, but all together they create a vivid impression that St. Ambrose is the biggest single figure in the history of liturgical song.

something like a formal art; but Ambrose seems to have been the first to gather together the various elements composing it and lay the foundations of a strictly ordered liturgy. From Milan the antiphonal psalmody spread through all the churches of the West. Even Rome, which until the twelfth century excluded the Ambrosian hymns, adopted antiphonal psalmody in the time of Pope Celestine I (422-32).* It is to Rome that one must look for the subsequent development of liturgical song; though until the time of the great schism the formative influences were more Byzantine than Latin. St. Leo the Great (440-61) established in the immediate vicinity of the Basilica of St. Peter a monastic community especially entrusted with the service of the canonical hours, under the patronage of Saints John and Paul, and this was followed in the second half of the seventh century by the community of St. Martin and, under Gregory III (731-41), by that of St. Stephen.

IV

The complete collection of liturgical chants upon which Rome finally set her approval has been called for ages the *Antiphonarium Romanum;* and this, as Rome became the head of the organization of the church, was adopted by all other branches in Western Europe as the Bible, so to speak, of ecclesiastical song. It was compiled from four collections of which the Ambrosian was one, the others being the Gregorian, the Gallican, and the Mozarabian or Spanish. The principal manuscripts in these collections have been reproduced in facsimile by the Benedictine monks of Solesmes in their invaluable *Paléographie musicale* (1889 *et seq.*). To quote from the introduction to this magnificent series: 'The Gregorian, Ambrosian, Moz-

* According to some musical historians, Celestine introduced the antiphonal psalmody from Poitiers.

arabian, and the little which remains to us of the Gallican *dialects*, seem in fact to have one common source, to have been derived from the same musical language: the chant of the Latin church in its cradle. That is at least the opinion to which we have been brought by the examination of the manuscripts in the libraries of our own monasteries and of those which we have been able to consult elsewhere. Concerning the similarities we can say modes and rhythms are the same in the four varieties of chant. The melodic forms present the same general character. . . . Moreover, in these diverse musical dialects certain melodic types or airs constantly recur which are always perfectly recognizable, in spite of the differences resulting from the peculiarities of style or character proper to each of them. Among the Ambrosian and Gregorian these mutual borrowings, these common heritages are especially frequent.'

The history of these collections is extremely obscure. No manuscripts are extant of earlier date than the twelfth century. As to who actually compiled the *Antiphonarium Romanum*, a long-standing and generally accepted tradition ascribed it to St. Gregory the Great (d. 604), but the validity of the tradition has been attacked by a number of reputable and authoritative modern historians, conspicuous among whom is Gevaert. Without entering into the merits of the controversy we shall briefly indicate the earliest sources of information on liturgical collections, following Gevaert on the Gregorian tradition, not in *parti pris*, but because the tradition has been so long and so strongly intrenched that it is more in need of examination than of support.

The first mention of a collection of chants occurs about the year 760 when Pope Paul I sent to King Pepin an Antiphonal and a Responsal.* In the time of

* *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, Jeffe, 2d ed., Leipzig, 1881.

Charlemagne there existed a missal and breviary called Gregorian, as we gather from a letter addressed to the emperor by Pope Hadrian. This is the earliest mention we find of the Gregorian tradition, and it is not very enlightening. The first writer to give us much information about the liturgy is Amalarius, who was deacon of Metz under Louis the Pious. Aurelian of Réomé (*ca.* 859) classes the melodies according to the order of the eight ecclesiastical modes, and Regino, Abbé of Prum, toward the end of the same century gives us in his *Tonarius* an extended catalogue of anthems and responses, accompanied by a neumatic notation. We find again a hazy reference to Gregory by Walafrid Strabo under Louis the Debonair, and it is only when we come to the life of St. Gregory, written by John the Deacon about 882, that we find an explicit and unequivocal ascription of the existing collection of liturgical chants to that pope.*

The scarcity of references to the Gregorian tradition among writers prior to John the Deacon is curious. Isidor of Seville and the Venerable Bede, both of whom occupied themselves much with the liturgy, are silent on the point; so is the *Liber Pontificalis.* Gregory's own writings are singularly lacking in references to music. His only utterance on the subject that has been preserved to us is the decree of the Synod of 595 in which he condemns the tendency of the priests to be more preoccupied with the effect of their voices than with the import of what they sing, and orders that they confine themselves thenceforth by reciting the Gospel in the celebration of the mass and leave the singing to sub-deacons and clerics of inferior grade. This would not of itself imply any great devotion on Gregory's part to liturgical music, though the necessity of training clerics of inferior grade to sing the services might

* *Vita S. Gregorii Magni,* in Mabillon, *Acta sanctorum ordinis benedicti,* Paris, 1668.

have suggested the founding of the *Schola Cantorum* which is traditionally ascribed to him. It is pointed out by Gevaert that the *Antiphonarius Gregorianus* does not fit the ecclesiastical calendar of the time of St. Gregory, but belongs to the liturgical usage of Rome about the year 750.* Duchesne credits the editing of the Gregorian missal to Pope Hadrian during the first years of Charlemagne's reign. The name Gregorian may have reference to Gregory II (715-31) or, more probably, to Gregory III. It is a fact that until the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century the churches did not open on Friday, and it was not allowed to celebrate mass on that day, because it coincided with the Pagan feast of Jupiter (*Jovis Dies*). Even as late as the end of the sixth century the celebration of this festival was so common that it was solemnly condemned by the Council of Narbonne (589). By the eighth century, however, the last remains of Paganism had so completely disappeared that the prohibition of Friday services was removed by Pope Gregory II, who ordained the celebration of the sacred rites on the Fridays of Lent. Now the Gregorian Antiphonary contains a mass for each Friday in Lent, while there is none in the Gelasian Missal of the seventh century. If the mass is not a later interpolation, then the Gregorian Antiphonary certainly could not have been compiled before the time of Gregory II.

Many historical considerations lead Gevaert to credit the completion and final formulation of liturgical chant to the Hellenic popes of the seventh and eighth centuries. Following the end of the Gothic kingdom and with the dominance of the Byzantine emperors begins the second period of church music in the West, a period which shows every sign of the Oriental influence so powerful at Rome under the rule of the exarchs of Ravenna. This influence is apparent not

* *Les origines du chant liturgique de l'église latine.*

only in the more ornate form of the music, but in the frequent use of the Greek language and in the importation of feasts foreign to the Roman rite. In the seventh century four of the most ancient feasts of the Virgin—the Purification, Annunciation, Assumption, and Nativity—were brought from the Orient, and from the same epoch dates the adoption at Rome of the feast called the Exaltation of the Cross, which originated in the Oriental church. 'By the seventh century,' says Gevaert, 'we are in the presence of an advanced art, conscious of its principles, with rules and formulas for each class of composition.' Skilled interpreters had been developed by the *Schola Cantorum*, and these, together with the Syrian monks who fled to Italy after the Mussulman conquest, were the real authors of the responses of the nocturnal office and the true chants of the mass. The popes of the seventh century, most of whom were themselves versed in the *cantilena romana*, were particularly solicitous about the beauty and order of the liturgy. To the eleven popes of Hellenic origin who held the chair of St. Peter between 678 and 752 is probably due the final development and perfection of liturgical forms. Chief among them was Agathon (678-681), who seems to have regulated or fixed definitely the texts of what in the eighth century was called the Responsal, or actual Antiphonary, containing the complete repertory of the office of the hours for the entire year. The Venerable Bede says that Agathon sent the leader of the Basilica singers to England to organize that part of the ecclesiastical service according to the usage of Rome. Leo II, we learn from the papal chronicles, was very learned in the sacred chant, as was also Sergius II. The latter, our authority thinks, inspired the last work on the Roman Gradual, and was the first to initiate the Roman singers in the doctrine of the four double ecclesiastical modes, which later writers, following the lead of Boethius, identified with

the eight tonal steps of Aristoxenus, falsely attributed to Ptolemy. The editing of that part of the *Liber Antiphonarius* which has become our Gradual was probably due to the Syrian pope, Gregory III, who was very active in the promotion of liturgical music.

The *Antiphonarium Romanum,* or complete collection of liturgical chants of the church—consisting of several hundred pieces—is divided into two distinct parts—the *Antiphonarium* proper and the *Gradual.* The former contains the offices of the canonical hours (*cursus ecclesiasticus*), consisting of the responses, anthems, and hymns reiterated day and night by religious communities. The custom of reciting the office began among the monastic orders of the Orient about the fourth century. Apparently it had its genesis in Antioch, about 350, and soon spread to the other Greek churches. The pilgrim in Silvia speaks of hearing the Vigils and other hours in the church of Jerusalem (386), and Bishop Cassian of Autun found the hour of Prime introduced at Bethlehem in 390. From Alexandria and Constantinople the office passed to Milan and Rome. In the sixth century it was organized somewhat as it is to-day. Cassiodorus (*ca.* 540) names seven *synaxes,* or daily reunions, and a similar number is mentioned in the rules of St. Benedict about the same time.

The *Gradual* consists of the services of the mass, and contains the anthems, responses, and hymns proper to these services. There are a few fixed pieces, such as the *Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei,* and *Credo,* constituting what is known as the Ordinary of the mass, and besides these there are a large number which vary according to the day and the name of the saint whose feast is celebrated. The chants belonging to the Introit and Communion are antiphonal, while those of the Gradual, Alleluja, Tractus, and Offertory are responsorial. The *Gloria in excelsis* is a sort of hymn. Be-

sides the hymns of the Ambrosian cycle, already spoken of, the Latin church adopted many Oriental hymns of the seventh and eighth centuries. Fourteen hymns of great age are still included in the Gradual, among them the *Pange lingua,* attributed to Fortunatus, the *Vexilla regis,* and the *Veni creator spiritus,* attributed to Charlemagne.

The hymns, anthems, and responses in the general repertory of church songs appear under two distinct forms—simple melodies and ornate melodies. The former, which are more or less syllabic, are used for all the anthems in the *cursus ecclesiasticus* and the responses belonging to that part of it which forms the office of the day. The ornate style is used for the anthems and responses of the mass and for the office of the night. The responses of the Gradual, Tractus, and Alleluja are musically the most interesting of the liturgical chants. They are not so much an integral part of the sacrifice of the mass as they are a sort of vocal intermezzo for solo and chorus, allowing the display of considerable art, both in technique and expression.

A peculiar form of composition which first appears in the liturgy after the ninth century is the *sequence* or *prosa.* Apparently this originated in the East and grew out of the custom of writing words as mnemonics under the syllables of the word Alleluja.* Gradually it became of such importance that it was detached from the Alleluja and made an independent form. The first examples of the sequence which appear in the Latin church are furnished by Notker Balbulus (830-912),

* The *Alleluja* is not really a word but a sort of shrilling effect of great antiquity among the Hebrews and other people of the Orient. It was produced by choruses of women in triumphal processions and other joyous celebrations, and seems to have been about half way between a song and a cheer. The early Christians used it in songs of joy and praise, and perhaps sang it to take the place of the instrumental prelude of the psalms. 'Laudes, hoc est alleluia canere, canticum est Hebræorum,' says Isidore of Seville. (*De off.,* I, 13.)

who was responsible for developing it to the proportions of an independent form. Indeed he has been called its inventor. An ancient Irish authority, quoted in the Book of Lismore, says, 'Notker, Abbot of St. Gall's, invented sequences, and Alleluja after them in the form in which they are.' * Among the most famous followers of Notker in the composition of sequences may be mentioned Tutilo or Tuathal (d. 915), an Irish monk of St. Gall's, Wipo, and Adam de Saint-Victor. The council of Trent suppressed all sequences except five, which are still used by the church. These are the *Victimæ pascali laudes* of Wipo; the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* of St. Thomas Aquinas; the *Dies Iræ* of Thomas de Celano; the *Stabat Mater* of Jacques de Benedictis, and the *Veni Sancte Spiritus.*

Another peculiar form, practically the antithesis of the sequence in its origin, is the trope, which consists of the dilation of the musical or the literary text by the interjection of complementary phrases. This—at least at first—was probably done to avoid monotony. For instance, instead of singing *Kyrie eleison* nine times in succession, it was sung as follows:

'*Kyrie* cuncti potens genitor Deus, omni creator *eleison*—fons et origo boni pie luxque perennis, *eleison.*
Kyrie salvicet pietas tua nos, bone rector, *eleison,*' etc.
(Tutilo, *Cod. S. Gall,* 484.)

All parts of the mass, from the Introit to the Communion, have been decorated with tropes. There has been compiled a list of seventy-eight tropes for the *Kyrie* alone. Like the sequence the trope developed from an accessory function to an independent form which at one time was practised with much assiduity.

* See 'History of Irish Music,' W. H. Grattan Flood, Dublin, 1906. Notker was the author of the famous *Antiphona de Morte,* beginning *Media vita in morte sumus* (In the midst of life we are in death), which was quickly adopted as a funeral anthem throughout Europe. Miraculous effects were attributed to it, and its use was so much abused that the council of Cologne (1316) forbade anybody to sing it who was not specially authorized by a bishop.

V

Whether the musical theory of the ecclesiastical chants prior to the fifth century—apart from the Ambrosian hymns—was influenced more by Roman or Oriental traditions is a moot point. The question, however, is not vital, as the real founder of the church system of modes, the Pythagorean philosopher Boethius (fifth century), was professedly an imitator of the Greek theorists. Boethius speaks of the ancients with something like veneration, and takes pride in writing like a Greek, after the fashion of Plato, Aristotle, Aristoxenus, Nichomachus, Philolaus, and Ptolemy. He is a mathematician rather than a musician. He congratulates Ptolemy on having ignored the testimony of the ear and condemns the practice of music as interfering with the just and logical consideration of theory. Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville speak in somewhat the same fashion. Boethius is the authority for a long line of church musicians, including Hucbald, Guido, Englebert, Jean de Muris, Adam de Fulda, and Alcuin. The mathematical view of music fathered by him gained such prevalence that in the curriculum of mediæval universities music was placed among the mathematical sciences.

We cannot do more here than briefly indicate the tone system used in the church after the liturgy had been definitely formulated, without going into the question of its earlier evolution. The system of modes was professedly founded on the tetrachordal species of the Greeks (see Chap. IV, p. 112), but with an obvious misunderstanding of the Greek system. At first only four forms were recognized, namely, the so-called authentic (from *αὐθεντέω*, to govern) modes of St. Ambrose. According to tradition St. Gregory added to these four 'plagal' (from *πλάγιος*, oblique). At any rate

before the eleventh century there were eight accepted church modes, four 'authentic' modes, and four 'plagal' or derived modes. Later theorists taught the existence of fourteen different scales. Two of these were rejected as 'impure'; the other twelve remained in use for centuries, and were known by the names of their Greek prototypes, but these names, too, were misapplied, as will be seen from the following table, where the octave D-d corresponding to the Phrygian species of the Greeks is named Dorian, and vice versa the octave F-f (Greek mixolydian) has become the Lydian, and so forth. The difference between authentic and plagal modes was chiefly one of range and emphasis. For example, in every mode two tones were considered, and were, as a matter of fact, of predominant importance; the *final* or note on which the piece ended, somewhat analogous to our tonic or key-note, and the *dominant,* the note most frequently touched in the course of the melody, the centre of gravity, so to speak, about which the melody moved. In the authentic modes the melody never sank below the final except in cadence, where it might take the note immediately below the final and rise by one step to the close; and the dominant was, like our dominant, in the middle of the scale. In the plagal modes, on the other hand, the melody wandered freely as low as a fourth below the final, which thus was near the middle of the melodic range; and the dominant was a third below the dominant of the corresponding authentic mode. Whenever the dominant fell on B, C was substituted (indicated by *N.B.* in the table) and in the rejected Locrian G was substituted for F.

Each authentic mode had its related plagal. The final of the ecclesiastical Dorian mode was D.* The

* Here should be noted one of the ways in which the Christian theorists misapplied the system of the Greeks. In Chapter IV we have seen that the Greeks did not consider pitch as in any way related to the character or *ethos* of the modes. This *ethos* was determined solely by the arrangement

range of a melody written in this mode was limited to notes which may be represented on the pianoforte by the white keys between D and d, including the two D's and, for the cadence, the C below the lower. The melody would centre about A and come to end on D. The related plagal mode, called the Hypodorian, had the same final, D, but the range of a melody in this mode was from the A below to the A above the final, centering about the dominant, F. The so-called relaxed modes which are frequently met with varied likewise

from the authentic modes in range which in such modes might be extended to a third below the final. The dom-

of the steps in the scale. The Christian theorists, on the other hand, though they still recognized the variety of character obtained by varying the distribution of steps in the scale, evidently allotted to the different modes a different final or pitch, and thus pitch came to influence the character of the modes. The modes might, however, still be transposed and sung at any pitch.

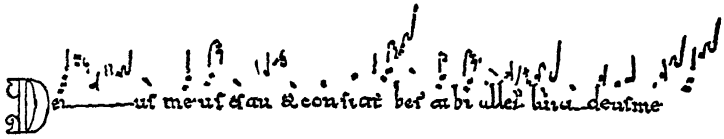
inant remained the same and the slight extension of range hardly altered the *ethos* or character of the authentic mode from which it thus technically varied.

The modes were in as far as possible strictly adhered to, but the occurrence of certain intervals difficult to sing and not wholly pleasant to the ear (notably the augmented fourth, or tritone,* from F to B), led to modifications or, as we should say, chromatic alterations. B-flat, for instance, was substituted for B whenever the interval from F to B occurred; and later, in the development of part singing, many other alterations were found necessary. Marks indicating such alterations were seldom written in the score, and singers were specially trained to alter intervals at sight, according to the elaborate rules of the practice called *musica ficta,* or 'false music.'

We have already adverted to the gradual decline in the use of the Greek language at Rome and the incidental passing from the minds and the memories of men of the alphabetical system of notation which had been inherited from the Greeks. It is not quite clear, however, how the Oriental church, which used Greek until a comparatively late period and even introduced that language into the liturgy of the Latin church, could have absolutely ignored the Greek system of notation. Yet such appears to be the case. As far as we can discover, the early chants of the church, both in the East and in the West, were handed down *viva voce,* and not until about the eighth century do we find traces of any attempt to devise a system of graphic aids to musical memory. This system, as we first find it, was of a most elementary sort and consisted merely of a few strokes and dashes placed above the text of the song and serving apparently no other purpose than to indicate in a general way the rising and falling inflections of the

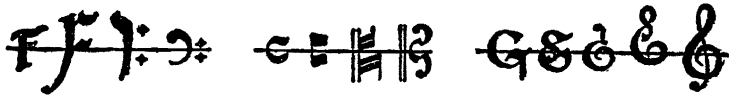
* This dreaded interval was called by churchmen *diabolus in musica,* and as such studiously avoided.

melody. These signs are known as *neumes,* and from them gradually developed our modern system of notation. The origin of the *neumes* is quite obscure. It would appear that at first they consisted merely of the acute and grave accents borrowed from the Byzantine grammarians and designed to indicate the occurrence of a rising and falling inflection respectively. To them were gradually added dashes, strokes, curves, and hooks in various combinations which in time became a fairly complete and precise system of musical writing. Their evolution into the square and diamond-shaped Gothic notation of the middle ages can be followed with sufficient clearness.



SPECIMEN OF NOTATION IN NEUMES, TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURY

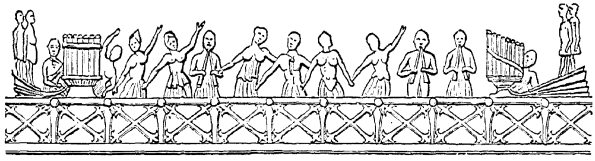
These signs, though representing definite turns and embellishments in the melody, gave no exact indication of pitch. The first sign of anything approaching a staff occurs in the tenth century, when one or two lines were drawn across the page to mark the place of certain tones or pitches. The first line was used for the tone F and the second for the tone C. Other lines were later added for the other tones, and each line was marked with the letter of the tone to which it was assigned. Though all the letters of the scale were used in this fashion, F, C, and G were the ones most commonly employed and from the Gothic characters for these were developed our modern clef signs, as may be seen from the following illustration:



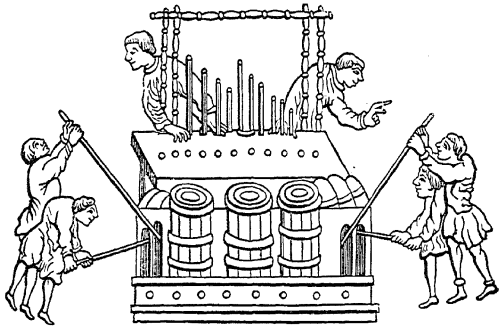
GENESIS OF CLEFS FROM GOTHIC LETTERS

A system of letter notation seems to have grown up contemporaneously with the neumatic system. Its invention has been ascribed to Gregory the Great and to Boethius, without much authority in either case. The first instances of its practical use are found in the writings of Notker Balbulus and Hucbald. Originally fifteen letters were used to designate the tones of two octaves; this number was afterward reduced to seven, repeated in successive octaves. The letters ran from A to G, but none of them had a definite tone meaning, as they have with us. A was merely the tone taken as a starting point and the series was always counted upward from it. In the system as it was finally completed the lowest G was added and called *gamma* to distinguish it from the G in the regular series. It is of interest to note here that the introduction of B flat necessitated the use of two differently shaped B's. The B *durum* was angular (♮) and the B *molle* was rounded (♭). From the former was derived our natural sign (♮) and from the latter our flat sign (♭). Our sharp is merely a variation of the natural. The system of letter notation was originally devised chiefly for instruments, particularly the organ, though its use gradually became universal. It belongs, however, more properly to a period later than the one we have been discussing.

One other item may justly find a place in this chapter, namely, the early history of the organ. The instrument has virtually since the beginning of our era been associated with the church, and was already a factor in the service during the plain-song period. We shall presently see how one of the earliest forms of polyphony—of music that was not merely plain chant—received its name from the instrument. The organ is of ancient origin; according to Riemann, its ancestors are the bagpipe and the Pan's pipe. Already in the second century B. C. there existed a true organ, in which air pressure was generated by pumps (bellows) and



1



2

3

compressed by means of water pressure and the manipulation of a keyboard. The invention of this so-called water-organ (*organum hydraulicum*, hydraulic organ) was ascribed to Ktesibios (170 B. C.) by his pupil Heron of Alexandria, whose writings have come down to us. Water was, it seems, not a necessary accessory to this instrument and organs were soon after constructed without the hydraulic principle, in Greece and Italy.

The instrument was known in the occident long before King Pepin received one as a present from Emperor Constantine Copronymos in 757 A. D. A Greek description of an organ belonging to Julian the Apostate (fourth century) and others mentioned by Cassiodorus and St. Augustine furnish valuable details. These instruments usually consisted of from eight to fifteen pipes (one to two octaves of the diatonic scale) which were constructed in the same manner as the flue pipes of modern organs. Throughout the ninth century organs were assiduously manufactured by monks, especially in France and Germany, and their compass was made to coincide with the middle range of the human voice (c to c′) so as to be used in connection with vocal instruction. The names of the tones were inscribed on the 'keys,' which were small wooden plates in *vertical* position. The player was obliged to pull this shutter away to allow the wind to enter the pipes, which would sound continuously till shut. By 980 there existed organs of considerable size, such as the famous one at Winchester, consisting of 400 pipes and two keyboards, requiring two players. A special form of notation, known as tablature, grew up for organ playing which coincides in general with our modern staff notation.

The above will, we believe, suffice to give a clear account of the musical activities of the period which we have called the Age of Plain-song. Among music-

loving people in general there is a lack of interest in plain-song, due partly to religious reasons, but chiefly born of a tendency to regard it as a dry and spiritless formula, an insipid sort of recitative designed to lend solemnity to devotional exercises. Complete lack of sympathy and imagination could alone excuse such an impression in the minds of those who have ever had the opportunity of hearing it sung in a sincere and reverent spirit. Unlike the pedantic, mathematical art that music came to be in the middle ages, plain-song was preëminently a form of emotional expression. Further, it was the expression of emotions most poignant and profound. It came from the hearts of men who were conscious actors in a gigantic drama. The inexpressible tortures of eternal fire, the ecstatic wonders of a golden heaven, the ineffable mystery of the Godhead, the awful panoply of the Judgment, the wrath and agony of a wronged and insulted Deity who yet offered Himself as a bloody holocaust for the sins of men—all the esoteric spiritual symbols of Christianity had for these early believers a real and literal significance. To them was vouchsafed the simple faith, the naïve wonder of childhood. Their souls were possessed with a great awe, with an intense longing, with profound humility and passionate remorse, with fiery zeal and ardent love, with the joyous ecstasy of anticipated salvation and the nameless horror of ever-threatening damnation. All this wealth of deep and keen emotion is conveyed to us in the songs of the early church with the direct simplicity of Greek drama. No one, listening to the mournful strains of the *Dies Iræ,* could escape the vague awe, the blood-congealing sense of that tremendous drama set for 'the day of wrath, that awful day when heaven and earth shall pass away'; nor could any one hear the serene melody of the *Veni sancte spiritus* without feeling some suggestion of the ineffable peace that follows the descent of the

Spirit Paraclete. Understanding and sympathy—difficult perhaps for a scientific and rationalistic age—are essential to the appreciation of these poets of the ecstatic vision; but for any one who can bring imagination and sensibility to the study of plain-song the results of the task will prove well worth the labor.

W. D. D.

CHAPTER VI

THE BEGINNINGS OF POLYPHONY

The third dimension in music—'Antiphony' and Polyphony; magadizing; organum and diaphony, parallel, oblique—Guido d'Arezzo and his reputed inventions; solmisation; progress of notation—Johannes Cotto and the *Ad organum faciendum;* contrary motion and the beginning of true polyphony—Measured music; mensural notation—*Faux-bourdon, gymel;* forms of mensural composition.

In the preceding chapter we have tried to trace the perfecting of a form of melody called plain-song. We have seen how the mass of the Catholic Church was set to solo music. Apart from the highly expressive quality which the music inevitably acquired because of the reality and life of the new emotional religion, the plain-song of the mass did not differ from the artistic music of the Greeks and the Romans, that is to say, it brought forward no new means of effect or of expression. We may say it was the adaptation of old and tried methods to new ends. We can hardly suppose that the technique of composition had been advanced by the early Christian composers beyond the point to which the Greeks had brought it, nor that the art of music had been expanded during the first centuries of the Christian era to greater proportions than the Greeks had developed it. The theorists of the first nine centuries made blunders in trying to systematize Christian song according to the remnants of Greek theory which had been preserved; yet the Greek scales were still in use, though misnamed by the theorists, and composers for the church still conformed to them. But about the beginning of the ninth century a new element appeared in music for the church which the Greeks had

left practically untouched and which was probably the contribution of the barbarian peoples of northern and western Europe, either the Germans or the Celts, namely, part-singing. To the single plain-song melodies of the ritual composers added another accompanying melody or part. The resultant progression of concords and discords was incipient harmony, the practice of so weaving two and later three and four melodies together was the beginning of the science or art of polyphony.

I

Polyphony was practically foreign to the music of the Greeks. They had observed, it is true, that a chorus of men and boys produced a different quality of sound from that of a chorus made up of all men or all boys, and they had analyzed the difference and found the cause of it to be that boys' voices were an octave higher than men's; and that boys and men singing together did not sing the same notes. This effect, which they also imitated with voices and certain instruments they called *Antiphony,* and they considered it more pleasing than the effect of voices or instruments in the same pitch which they called *Homophony.* The practice of making music in octaves was called *magadizing,* from the name of a large harp-like instrument, the magadis, upon which it was possible. But magadizing cannot be considered the forerunner of polyphony, for, though melodies an octave apart may be considered not strictly the same, still they pursue the same course and are in no way independent of each other; and the effect of a melody sung in octaves differs from the effect of one sung in unison only in quality, not at all in kind.

The allegiance of theorists to Greek culture all through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance has tended to conceal the actual origin of polyphony, but

as early as 1767 J. J. Rousseau wrote in his *Dictionnaire de musique,* 'It is hard not to suspect that all our harmony is an invention of the Goths or the Barbarians.' And later: 'It was reserved to the people of the North to make this great discovery and to bequeath it as the foundation of all the rules of the art of music.'

The kernel from which the complicated science of polyphony sprang is simple to understand. One voice sang a melody, another voice or an instrument, starting with it, wove a counter-melody about it, elaborated by the flourishes and melismas which are still dear to the people of the Orient. Some such sort of primitive improvisation seems to have been practised by the people of northern Europe, and to have been taken over by the church singers. The later art of *déchant sur le livre* or improvised descant was essentially no different and seems to have been of very ancient origin. The early theorists naturally took it upon themselves to regulate and systematize the popular practice, and thereupon polyphony first comes to our notice through their works in a very stiff and ugly form of music called *organum,* which in its strictest form is hardly more to be considered polyphony than the magadizing of the Greeks.

The works of many of the ninth century theorists such as Aurelian of Réomé, and Remy of Auxerre, suggest that some form of part-singing was practised in their day, though they leave us in confusion owing to the ambiguity of their language. The famous scholar Scotus Erigena (880) mentions organum, but in a passage that is difficult and obscure. Regino, abbot of Prum in 892, is the first to define consonance and dissonance in such a way as to leave no doubt that he considers them from the point of view of polyphony, that is to say, as sounds that are the result of two different notes sung simultaneously. In the works of Hucbald of St. Amand in Flanders, quite at the end of

the century, if not well into the tenth (Hucbald died in 930 or 932, over ninety years of age), there is at last a definite and clear description of organum. The word organum is an adaptation of the name of the instrument on which the art could be imitated, or, perhaps, from which it partly originated, the organ; just as the Greeks coined a word from magadis.

Of Hucbald's life little is known save that he was born about 840, that he was a monk, a poet, and a musician, a disciple of St. Remy of Auxerre and a friend of St. Odo of Cluny. Up to within recent years several important works on music were attributed to him, of which only one seems now to be actually his—the tract, *De Harmonica Institutione,* of which several copies are in existence. This and the *Musica Enchiriadis* of his friend St. Odo are responsible for the widespread belief that polyphony actually sprang from a hideous progression of empty fourths and fifths. Both theorists, in their efforts to confine the current form of extemporized descant in the strict bounds of theory, reduced it thus: to a given melody taken from the plain-song of the church the descanter or organizer added another at the interval of a fifth or fourth below, which followed the first melody or *cantus firmus* note by note in strictly parallel movement. The fourth seems to have been regarded as the pleasanter of the intervals, though, as we shall see, it led composers into difficulties, to overcome which Hucbald himself proposed a relaxation of the stiff parallel movement between the parts. In the strict organum or *diaphony* the movement was thus:

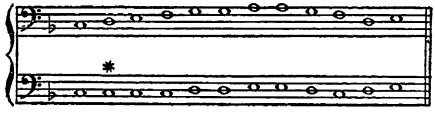
Either or both of the parts might be doubled at the octave, in which case the diaphony was called composite.

Just why the intervals of the fifth and fourth should have been chosen for this parallel music, which is excruciating to our modern ears, is not positively known. The simple obvious answer to the riddle is that Hucbald and his contemporaries based their theories on the theories of the Greeks, who regarded the fifth and fourth as consonances nearest the perfect consonance of the octave and unison. But in that case we have to ask ourselves why Hucbald and his followers regarded the diaphony of the fourth as pleasanter than that of the fifth which they none the less acknowledged was more nearly perfect. Dr. Hugo Riemann has suggested a solution to this difficulty which is in substance that organum was an attempt to assimilate elements of an ancient art of singing practised by the Welsh and other Celtic singers. The Welsh scale is a *pentatonic* scale, that is, a scale of five steps in which half steps are skipped. In terms of the keyboard, it can be represented by a scale starting upon E-flat and proceeding to the E-flat above or below only by way of the black keys between or by a similar progression between any other two black keys an octave apart. In such a scale parallel fourths are impossible, as indeed they are in the Greek scales of eight notes upon which the church music was based; but whereas the progression of the fourths in the Greek scales is broken by the imperfect and very unpleasant interval of the tritone, in the pentatonic scale it is interrupted by the pleasing major

third. Such a progression of fourths and thirds seems to spring almost naturally from the pentatonic scales and was very likely much practised by the ancient Welsh singers.* A comparison of two examples will make the difference obvious.

* See Riemann, *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, I², p. 144 ff.

The presence in the octatonic scale of the disagreeable tritone, marked with a star in the example, forced even Hucbald and Odo to make some provision for avoiding it. This consisted in limiting the movement of the 'organizing' voice. It was not allowed to descend below a certain point in the scale. In those cases, therefore, in which the *cantus firmus* began in such a way that the organizing voice could not accompany it at the start without sinking below its prescribed limit the organizing voice must start with the same note as the *cantus firmus* and hold that note until the *cantus firmus* had risen so that it was possible for the organizing voice to follow it at the interval of the fourth. In the same way the parts were forced to close at the unison if the movement of the *cantus firmus* did not permit the organizing voice to follow it at the interval of a fourth without going below its limit. The following example will make this clear:



In this case it will be noted that the movement of the parts is no longer continuously parallel, but that there are passages in which it is oblique. Indeed it is hardly conceivable that strict parallel movement was ever adhered to in anything but theory. It is interesting to observe how even in theory it had to give way, and how by the presence of the tritone in the scale the theorists were practically forced into a genuine polyphonic style. The strict style, as we have already remarked, was hardly more polyphonic than the magadizing of the Greeks; for, though the voice parts are actually different, still each is closely bound to the other and has no independent movement of its own; but in the freer

style there is a difference if not an independence of movement.

In connection with this example it is also well to note that through the oblique movement the parts are made to sound other intervals than the fourth or fifth or unison, which with the octave were regarded for centuries as the only consonances. At the first star they are singing the harsh interval of a second; immediately after they sing a major third. By the earliest theorists these dissonances were disregarded or accepted as necessary evils, the unavoidable results of the restrictions under which the organizing voice was laid. But if the free diaphony was practised at all it was to lead musicians inevitably to a recognition of these intervals, and of the effect of contrasting one kind with another. In the works of Hucbald and Odo and their contemporaries, however, the ideal is theoretically the parallel progression of the only consonances they would admit, the fourth, fifth, and octave. Oblique movement was first of all a way to escape the tritone, and the unnamed dissonances were haphazard. Thus we find only the mere germ of the science of polyphony. The dry stiffness of the music and the inadequacy of the cumbersome rules must lead one to believe that learned men, true to their time, were doing what they could to define a popular free practice within the limits of theory. The sudden untraceable advent of a new free style some hundred years or more later goes to prove that the free descant of a genuinely musical people was never actually suppressed or discontinued by the influence of the theorists.

II

However, before considering the new diaphony, we have still to trace the further progress of the organum of Hucbald and Odo. The next theorist of importance

was Guido of Arezzo. To Guido have been attributed at various times most of the important inventions and reforms of early polyphonic music, among them descant, organum and diaphony, the hexachordal system, the staff for notation, and even the spinet; but the wealth of tradition which clothed him so gloriously has, as in the case of many others, been gradually stripped from him, till we find him disclosed as a brilliantly learned monk and a famous teacher, author of but few of the works which possibly his teaching inspired. He has recently been identified with a French monk of the Benedictine monastery of St. Maur des Fosses.* He was born at or near Arezzo about 990, and in due time became a Benedictine monk. He must have had remarkable talent for music, for about 1022 Pope Benedict VIII, hearing that he had invented a new method for teaching singing, invited him to Rome to question him about it. He visited Rome again a few years later on the express invitation of Pope John XIX, and this time brought with him a copy of the *Antiphonarium,* written according to his own method of notation. The story goes that the pope was so impressed by the new method that he refused to allow Guido to leave the audience chamber until he had himself learned to sing from it. After this he tried to persuade Guido to remain in Rome, but Guido, on the plea of ill-health, left Rome, promising to return the following year. However, he accepted an invitation from the abbot of a monastery near Ferrara to go there and teach singing to the monks and choir-boys; and he stayed there several years, during which he wrote one of the most important of his works, the *Micrologus,* dedicated to the bishop of Arezzo. Later he became abbot of the Monastery of Santa Croce near Arezzo, and he died there about the year 1050. During the time of his second visit to Rome he wrote the famous letter

* See article by Dom Germain in *Revue de l'art chrétien,* 1888.

to Michael, a monk at Pomposa, which has led historians to believe that he was actually the inventor of a new division of the scales into groups of six notes, called *hexachorda,* and a new system of teaching based on this division.

The case of Guido is typical of the period in which he lived. Very evidently an unusually gifted teacher, as Hucbald was a hundred years before him, his influence was strong over the communities with which he came into contact, and spread abroad after his death, so that many innovations which were probably the results of slow growth were attributed to his inventiveness. The *Micrologus* contains many rules for the construction of organum below a *cantus firmus,* which are not very much advanced beyond those of Hucbald and Odo. The old strict diaphony is still held by him in respect, though the free is much preferred. To those intervals which result from the 'free' treatment of the organizing voice, however, he gives names, and he is conscious of their effect; so that, where Hucbald and Odo confined themselves to giving rules for the movement of the organizing voice in such a way as to avoid the harsh tritone even at the cost of other dissonances, Guido gives rules to direct singers in the use of these dissonances for themselves, which, as we have seen, in the earlier treatises were considered accidental. This marks a real advance. But there is in Guido's works the same attempt merely to make rules, to harness music to logical theory, that we found in Hucbald's and Odo's; and it is again hard to believe that his method of organizing was in common practice, or that it represents the style of church singing of his day. From the accounts of the early Christians, from the elaborate ornamentation of the plain-song in mediæval manuscripts in which it is first found written down, and from later accounts of the 'descanters' we are influenced to believe that music was sung in the church

with a warmth of feeling, sometimes exalted, sometimes hysterical even to the point of stamping with the feet and gesticulating, from which the standardized bald ornamentation of Guido is far removed. Furthermore, the next important treatises after Guido's, one by Johannes Cotto, and an anonymous one called *Ad Organum Faciendum,* deal with the subject of organum in a wholly new way and show an advance which can hardly be explained unless we admit that a freer kind of organum was much in use in Guido's day than that which he describes and for which he makes his rules.

But before proceeding with the development of the early polyphony after the time of Guido, we have to consider two inventions in music which have been for centuries placed to his credit. In the first place he is supposed to have divided the scale, which, it will be remembered, had always been considered as consisting of groups of four notes called tetrachords placed one above the other, into overlapping groups of six notes called hexachords. The first began on G, the second on C, the third on F, and the others were reduplications of these at the octave. The superiority of this system over the system of tetrachords, inherited from the Greeks, was that in each hexachord the halftone occupies the same position, that is, between the third and fourth steps.* It is not certain whether Guido was the first so to divide the scale, but he evidently did much to perfect the new system.

There has long been a tradition that he was the first to give those names to the notes of the hexachord which

* Strict 'imitation' would be extremely difficult in the tetrachordal system. A subject given in one tetrachord could not be imitated exactly in another, because the tetrachords varied from each other by the position of the half-step within them. Compare, for instance, the modern major and minor modes. The answer given in minor to a subject announced in major is not a strict imitation. If, on the other hand, the answer to a subject in a certain hexachord was given in another hexachord, it would necessarily be a strict imitation, since in all hexachords the half-step came between the third and fourth tones, between *mi* and *fa.*

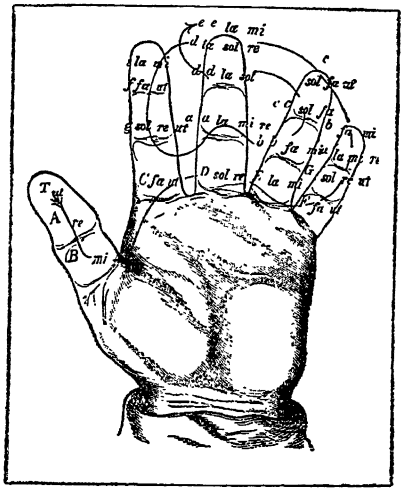
are in use even at the present day. Having noticed that the successive lines of a hymn to St. John the Baptist began on successive notes of the scale, the first on G, the second on A, the third on B, etc., up to the sixth note, namely, E, he is supposed to have associated the first syllable of each line with the note to which it was sung. The hymn reads as follows:

Ut queant laxis
*Re*sonari fibris
*Mi*ra gestorum
*Fa*muli tuorum
*Sol*ve poliuti
*La*bii reatum
Sancte Joannes.

Hence G was called *ut;* A, *re; B, mi;* C, *fa;* D, *sol;* and E, *la.* These are the notes of the first hexachord, and these names are given to the notes of every hexachord. The half-step therefore was always *mi-fa.* Since the hexachords overlapped, several tones acquired two or even three names. For instance, the second hexachord began on C, which was also the fourth note of the first hexachord, and in the complete system this C was C-*fa-ut.* The fourth hexachord began on G an octave above the first. This G was not only the lowest note of the fourth hexachord but the second of the third and the fourth of the second. Therefore, its complete name was G-*sol-re-ut.* The lowest G, which Guido is said to have added to perfect the system, was called gamma. It was always *gamma-ut,* from which our word gamut. The process of giving each note its proper series of names was called solmisation.

The system seems to us clumsy and inadequate. We cannot but ask ourselves why Guido did not choose the natural limit of the octave for his groups instead of the sixth. However, it was a great improvement over the yet clumsier system of the tetrachords, and

was of great service to musicians down to comparatively recent times. One may find no end of examples of its use in the works of the great polyphonic writers. As a help to students in learning it, the system of the Guidonian Hand was invented, whereby the various tones and syllables of the hexachords were assigned to the joints of the hand and could be counted off on the hand much as children are taught in kindergarten to count on their fingers. That Guido himself invented this elementary system is doubtful, though his name has become associated with it.



THE GUIDONIAN HAND

Guido must also be credited with valuable improvements in the art of notation. In his day two systems were in use. One employed the letters of the alphabet, capitals for the lowest octave, small letters for the next and double letters for the highest. This was exact, though difficult and clumsy. The other employed neumes (see Chap. V) superimposed over the words (of the text to be sung) at distances varying according to the pitch of the sound. This, though essentially

graphic, was inaccurate. Composers were already accustomed to draw *two* lines over the text, each of which stood for a definite pitch, one for F, colored red, and one for C, a fifth above, colored yellow, but the pitch of notes between or below or above these lines was, of course, still only indefinitely indicated by the distance of the neumes from them. Guido therefore added another line between these two, representing A, and one above representing E, both colored black. Thus the four-line staff was perfected. It has remained the orthodox staff for plain-song down to the present day. This improvement of notation, in addition to the hexachordal system and the invention of solmisation, have all had a lasting influence upon music, and through his close connection with them Guido of Arezzo stands out as one of the most brilliant figures in the early history of music.

III

Hardly a trace has survived of the development of music during the fifty years after the death of Guido, about 1050. The next works which cast light upon music were written about 1100. One is the *Musica* of Johannes Cotto, the other the anonymous *Ad organum faciendum* mentioned above. In both works a wholly new style of organum makes its appearance. In the first place, the organizing voice now sings normally above the *cantus firmus*, though the whole style is so relatively free that the parts frequently cross each other, sometimes coming to end with the organizing voice below. In the second place, contrary movement in the voice parts is preferred to parallel or oblique movement; that is, if the melody ascends, the accompanying voice, if possible, descends, and *vice versa*. Thus the two melodies have each an individual free movement and the science of polyphony is really under

way. Moreover, they proceed now through a series of consonances. There are no haphazard dissonances as in the earlier free organum of both Hucbald and Guido. The organizing voice is no longer directed only in such a way as is easiest to avoid the hated tritone, but is planned to sing *always* in consonance with the *cantus firmus.* The following example illustrates the movement of the parts in this new system:

Cotto is rather indifferent and, of course, dry about the whole subject of *organum.* It occupied but a chapter in his rather long treatise. But the 'Anonymus' is full of enthusiasm and loud in his praises of this method of part-singing and bold in his declaration of its superiority over the unaccompanied plainsong. Such enthusiasm smacks a little of the layman, and is but another indication of the real origin of *organum* in the improvised descant of the people, quite out of the despotism of theory. The Anonymus gives a great many rules for the conduct of the organizing or improvising voice. He has divided the system into two modes, determined by the interval at which the voices start out. For instance, rules of the first mode state how the organizing voice must proceed when it starts in unison with the *cantus firmus,* or at the octave. If it starts at the fourth or fifth it is controlled by the rules of the second mode. There are three other modes which are determined by the various progressions of the parts in the middle of the piece. The division into modes and the rules are of little importance, for it is obvious that only the first few notes of a piece are definitely influenced by the position at which the parts start and that after this influence ceases to make itself felt the modes dissolve into each

other. Thus, though the enthusiasm of the Anonymus points to the popularity of the current practice of organizing, whatever it may have been, his rules are but another example of the inability of theory to cope with it. Still this theoretical composition continued to claim the respect of teachers and composers late into the second half of the twelfth century.

A treatise by Guy, Abbot of Chalis, about this time, is concerned with essentially the same problems and presents no really new point of view. He is practically the last of the theorizing organizers. Organum gave way to a new kind of music. In the course of over two hundred years it had run perfectly within the narrow limits to which it had been inevitably confined, and the science of it was briefly this: to devise over any given melody a counter-melody which accompanied it note by note, moving, as far as possible, in contrary motion, sinking to meet the melody when it rose, rising away from it when it fell, and, with few exceptions, in strictest concord of octaves, fifth, fourths, and unison. Rules had been formulated to cover practically all combinations which could occur in the narrow scheme. The restricted, cramped art then crumbled into dust and disappeared. Again and again this process is repeated in the history of music. The essence of music, and, indeed, of any art, cannot be caught by rules and theories. The stricter the rules the more surely will music rebel and seek expression in new and natural forms. We cannot believe that music in the Middle Ages was not a means of expression, that it was not warm with life; and therefore we cannot believe that this dry organum of Hucbald and Odo, of Guido of Arezzo, of Guy of Chalis, which was still-born of scholastic theory, is representative of the actual practice of music, either in the church or among the people. On the other hand, these excellent old monks were pioneers in the science of polyphonic writing. Inadequate

and confusing as their rules and theories may be, they are none the less the first rules and theories in the field, the first attempts to give to polyphony the dignity and regularity of Art.

Meanwhile, long before Guy of Chalis had written what may be taken as the final word on organum, the new art which was destined to supplant it was developing both in England and in France. Two little pieces, one *Ut tuo propitiatus,* the other *Mira lege, miro modo,* have survived from the first part of the twelfth century. Both are written in a freely moving style in which the use of concords and discords appears quite unrestricted. Moreover, the second of them is distinctly metrical, and in lively rhythm. It is noted with neumes on a staff and the rhythm is evident only through the words, for the neumes gave no indication of the length or shortness of the notes which they represented, but only their pitch. Now in both these little pieces there are places where the organizing voice sings more than one note to a note of the *cantus firmus* or *vice versa.* So long as composers set only metrical texts to music the rhythm of the verse easily determined the rhythm in which the shorter notes were to be sung over the longer; but the text of the mass was in unmetrical prose, and if composers, in setting this to music in more than one part, wished one part to sing several notes to the other's one, they had no means of indicating the rhythm or measure in which these notes were to be sung. Hence it became necessary for them to invent a standard metrical measure and a system of notation whereby it could be indicated. Their efforts in this direction inaugurated the second period in the history of polyphonic music, which is known as the period of measured music, and which extends roughly from the first half of the twelfth century to the first quarter of the fourteenth, approximately from 1150 to 1325.

IV

Our information regarding the development of the new art of measured music comes mainly from treatises which appeared in the course of these two centuries. Among them the most important are the two earliest, *Discantus positio vulgaris* and *De musica libellus,* both anonymous and both belonging to the second half of the twelfth century; the *De musica mensurabili positio* of Jean de Garlandia, written about 1245; and at last the great *Ars cantus mensurabilis,* commonly attributed to Franco of Cologne, about whose identity there is little certainty, and the work of Walter Odington, the English mathematician, written about 1280, *De speculatione musices.* As the earlier theorists succeeded in compressing a certain kind of music within the strict limits of mathematical theory, so the mensuralists finally bound up music in an exact arbitrary system from which it was again to break free in the so-called *Ars nova.* But the field of their efforts was much larger than that of the organum and the results of their work consequently of more lasting importance.

The first attempts were toward the perfecting of a system of measuring music in time, and the outcome was the Perfect System, a thoroughly arbitrary and unnatural scheme of triple values. That the natural division of a musical note is into two halves scarcely needs an explanation. We therefore divide our whole notes into half notes, the halves into quarters, the quarters into eighths, and so forth. But the mensuralists divided the whole note into three parts or two unequal parts, and each of these into three more. The standard note was the *longa.* It was theoretically held to contain in itself the triple value of the perfect measure. Hence it was called the *longa perfecta.* The first sub-

division of the *longa* in the perfect system was into three *brevis* and of the *brevis* into three *semi-brevis.* But in those cases in which the *longa* was divided into two unequal parts one of these parts was still called a *longa.* This *longa,* however, was considered imperfect, and its imperfection was made up by a *brevis.* So, too, the perfect *brevis* could be divided into an imperfect and a *semi-brevis.*

Let us now consider the signs by which these values were expressed. The sign for the *longa,* or long, as we shall henceforth call it, was a modification of one of the old neumes called a *virga,* written thus ; that for the *brevis* or breve came from the *punctum,* written thus . The new signs were long and breve . The *semi-breve* was a lozenge-shaped alteration of the breve, . This seems simple enough until we come across the distressful circumstances that the same sign represented both the perfect and imperfect long, and that the perfect and imperfect breve, too, shared the same figure. The following table illustrates the early mensural notes and their equivalents in modern notation.

In our age of utilitarian inspiration the imperfections of such a system of notation in which the two most frequent signs had a twofold significance would be remedied by the invention of other signs; but the theorists of that day found it easier and more natural to supplement the system with numbers of rules whereby the exact values of the notes could be determined. For example, a long followed by another long was perfect; a long followed by a breve was imperfect and to

be valued as two beats. But a long followed by two breves was perfect, for the two breves in themselves made up a second perfect three, since one was considered as *recta* and the other as *altera*. A long followed by three *breves* was obviously perfect, since the three *breves* could not but make up a perfect measure. Similar rules governed the valuation of the *breve*. Three *breves* between two longs were not to be altered, four *breves* between two longs also remained unaltered, since one of them counted to make up the imperfection of the preceding long. But five *breves* required alteration, the first three counting as one perfect measure, the last two attaining perfection by the alteration of the second of them. *Semi-breves* were also subject to the laws of perfection and alteration and were governed by much the same laws as governed the *breves*. One who had mastered all these laws was able to read music with more or less certainty, though it must have been necessary for him to look ahead constantly, in order to estimate the value of the note actually before him.

Later theorists did not fail to associate the mysteries of the perfect system of triple values with the Trinity, and thus sprang up the belief that the earlier mensuralists had had the perfection of the Trinity in mind when they allotted to the perfect *longa* its measure of three values. Yet, clumsy as the system of triple values was, it was founded upon perfectly rational principles. It was the best compromise in music between several poetic metres, some of which, like the Iambic and Trochaic, are essentially triple; others, like the Dactylic and Anapæstic, essentially double. Music, during all the years while the mensuralists were supreme, was profoundly influenced by poetic metres. All these had been reduced by means of the triple proportion to six formulas or modes, and every piece of music was theoretically in one or another of these

modes. Such a definite classification of various rhythms, besides being eminently gratifying to the learned theorists, was of considerable assistance to the singer in his way through the maze of mensural notation, who, knowing the mode in which he was to sing, had but to fit the notes before him into the persistent, generally unvarying, rhythm proper to that mode. Composers were well aware of the monotony of one rhythm long continued. They therefore interrupted the beats by pauses, and occasionally shifted in the midst of a piece from one mode to another. The pauses were represented by vertical lines across the staff, and the length of the pause was determined by the length of the line—the perfect pause of three beats being represented by a line drawn up through three spaces, the imperfect pause of two beats by one crossing two spaces and the others in proportion. The end was marked by a line drawn across the entire staff.

So far the complexities of the mensural system of notation are not too difficult to follow with comparative ease. But the longs, the *breves* and the *semibreves* were employed only in the notation of syllabic music; that is, of music in which each note corresponds to a syllable of the text. In those cases where one syllable was extended through several notes, another form of notation was employed. The several notes so sung were bound together in one complex sign called a ligature. The ligatures, like the longs and the breves, were adaptations of old neumatic signs. In the old plainsong the flourishes or melismas on single syllables were sung in a free rhythm; but the mensuralists were determined to reduce every phrase of music to exact rhythmical proportions, and these easy, graceful, soaring ornaments were crushed with the rest in the iron grip of their system. Hence the ligatures were interpreted according to the strictest rules. A few examples will serve to show the extraordinary complexity of the

system. Among the old neumatic signs which stood for a series of notes two were of especially frequent occurrence. These were the *podatus,* , and the *clivis,* Of these the first represented an ascending series, the second—which seems to have developed from the circumflex accent—a descending series. It will be noticed that the clivis begins with an upward stroke to the first note, which is represented by the heavy part of the line at the top of the curve. The *podatus* has no such stroke. Several other signs were derived from these two, and those derived from the *clivis* began always with this upward stroke, and those from the *podatus* were without it. Thus all ascending ornaments were represented by a neume which had no preliminary stroke, all descending ornaments by one with the preliminary stroke. This characteristic peculiarity was maintained by the mensuralists in their ligatures. The *podatus* became , the *clivis* In so far as the mensural system of notation was graphic, in that the position of the notes in the scale presented accurately the direction of the changing pitch of the sounds they stood for, there was no need of preserving in the ligatures such peculiarities of the neumatic signs. But, on the other hand, these peculiarities were needed to represent the mensural value of the notes in the ligatures, the more so because the mensuralists were determined to allow no freedom in the rendering of those ornaments in ligature, but rather to reduce each one to an exact numerical value. Hence we find two kinds of ligatures: those which preserved the traits inherited from their neumatic ancestors, and those in which such marks were lacking. The first were very properly called *cum proprietate,* the others *sine proprietate;* and the rule was that in every ligature *cum proprietate* the first note was a *breve,* while in every ligature *sine proprietate* it was

a long. If the ligature represented a series of *breves* and *semi-breves,* the preliminary stroke was upward from the note, not to it, thus: .

Further than this we need not go in our explanation of notation according to the mensural system. The mensuralists had their way and reduced all music to a purely arbitrary system of triple proportion, and their notation, though bewildering and complex, was practically without flaw. The reaction from it will be treated in the next chapter. Meanwhile we have to consider what forms of music developed under this new method.

V

Regarding the relations of the voice parts, one is struck by the new attitude toward consonance and dissonance of which they give proof. In the old and in the free organum only four intervals were admitted as consonant—the unison, the fourth, the fifth, and the octave. The third and the sixth, which add so much color to our harmony, were appreciated and considered pleasant only just before the final unison or octave. The mensuralists admitted them as consonant, though they qualified them as imperfect. For, true to the time in which they lived, they divided the consonants theoretically into classes—the octave and unison being defined as perfect, the fourth and the fifth as intermediate, the third and later the sixth as imperfect. So far did the love of system carry them that, feeling the need of a balancing theory of dissonances, these were divided into three classes similarly defined as perfect, intermediate, and imperfect. We should, indeed, be hard put to-day to discriminate between a perfect and an imperfect discord. Of the imperfect consonances the thirds were first to be recognized, the minor third being preferred, as less imperfect, to the

major. The major sixth came next and the last to be consecrated was the minor sixth, which, for some years after the major had been admitted among the tolerably pleasant concords, was held to be intolerably dissonant. The fact that these concords, now held to be the richest and most satisfying in music, were then called imperfect is striking proof of the perseverance of the old classical ideas of concord and discord inherited from the Greeks. Again, one must suspect that theory and practice do not walk hand in hand through the history of music in the Middle Ages.

The admission of thirds and sixths even grudgingly among the consonant intervals is proof that through some common or popular practice of singing they had become familiar and pleasant to the ears of men. We have already mentioned the possible origin of organum in the practice of improvising counter-melodies which seems to have existed among the Celts and Germans of Europe at a very early age. There is some reason to believe that in this practice thirds and sixths played an important rôle; in fact, that there were two kinds of organizing or descant, one of which, called *gymel,* consisted wholly of thirds, the other, called *faux-bourdon,* of thirds and sixths. These kinds of organizing, it is true, are not mentioned by name until nearly the close of the fourteenth century, but there is evidence that they were of ancient origin. Whether or not these were the popular practices which brought the agreeable nature of thirds and sixths to the attention of the mensuralists has not yet been definitely determined. The reader is referred to Dr. Riemann's *Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX-XIV Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1898), and the 'Oxford History of Music,' Vol. I, by H. E. Wooldridge (Part I, p. 160), for discussions on both sides of the question. The word gymel was derived from the Latin *gemellus,* meaning twin, and the *cantus gemellus,* or organizing in thirds,

in fact, consists of twin melodies. *Faux-bourdon* means false burden, or bass. The term was applied to the practice of singers who sang the lowest part of a piece of music an octave higher than it was actually written. If the chord C-E-G is so sung then it becomes E-G-C, and whereas in the original chord as written the intervals are the third, from C to E, and the fifth, from C. to G, in the transposed form the intervals are the third, from E to G, and the sixth, from E to C, of which intervals *faux-bourdon* consisted. The origin of this 'false singing' offered by Mr. Wooldridge,* though properly belonging in a later period, may be summarized here.

By the first quarter of the fourteenth century the methods of descant had become thoroughly obnoxious to the ecclesiastical authorities and the Pope, John XXII, issued a decree in 1322 for the restriction of descant and for the reëstablishing of plainsong. The old parallel organum of the fifth and fourth was still allowed. Singers, chafing under the severe restraint, added a third part between the cantus firmus and the fifth which on the written page looked innocent enough to escape detection, and further enriched the effect of their singing by transposing their plainsong to the octave above, which, as we have seen, then moved in the pleasant relation of the sixth to the written middle part. Thus, though the written parts looked in the book sufficiently like the old parallel organum, the effect of the singing was totally different. However, this explanation of the origin of the term *faux-bourdon* leaves us still unenlightened as to how the sixth had come to sound so agreeably to the ears of these rebellious singers.

Having perfected a system of notation, and having admitted the intervals pleasantest to our ears among

* *Op. cit.*, Part II.

the consonances to be allowed, having thus broadly widened their technique and the possibilities of music, we might well expect pleasing results from the mensuralists. But their music is, as a matter of fact, for the most part rigid and harsh. Several new forms of composition had been invented and had been perfected, notably by the two great organists of Notre Dame in Paris, Leo or Leonin, and his successor, Perotin. It is customary to group these compositions under three headings, namely, compositions in which all parts have the same words, compositions in which not all parts have words, and compositions in which the parts have different words. Among the first the *cantilena* (*chanson*), the *rondel* and *rota* are best understood, though the distinction between the cantilena and the rondel is not evident. The rondel was a piece in which each voice sang a part of the same melody in turn, all singing together; but, whereas in the rota one voice began alone and the others entered each after the other with the same melody at stated intervals, until all were singing together, in the rondel all voices began together, each singing its own melody, which was, in turn, exchanged for that of the others. Among the compositions of the second class (in which not all parts have words), the *conductus* and the *organum purum* were most in favor. Both are but vaguely understood. The *organum purum,* evidently the survival of the old free descant, was written for two, three, or even four voices. The tenor sang the tones of a plainsong melody in very long notes, while the other voices sang florid melodies above it, merely to vocalizing syllables. The *conductus* differed from this mainly in that such passages of florid descant over extended syllables of the plainsong were interspersed with passages in which the plainsong moved naturally in metrical rhythm, and in which the descant accompanied it note for note. In the *conductus* composers made use of all the devices

of imitation and sequence which were at their command. Finally, the third class of compositions named above is represented by the Motet.

The Motet is by far the most remarkable of all forms invented by the mensuralists. In the first place, a melody, usually some bit of plainsong, was written down in a definite rhythmical formula. There were several of these formulæ, called *ordines*, at the service of the composers. The tenor part was made up of the repetition of this short formal phrase. Over this two descanting parts were set, which might be original with the composer, but which later were almost invariably two songs, preferably secular songs. These two songs were simply forced into rhythmical conformity to the tenor. They were slightly modified so as to come into consonance with each other and with the tenor at the beginning and end of the lines. Apart from this they were in no way related, either to each other or to the tenor. So came about the remarkable series of compositions in which three distinct songs, never intended to go together, are bound fast to each other by the rules of measured music, in which the tenor drones a nonsense syllable, while the descant and the treble may be singing, the one the praises of the Virgin, the other the praises of good wine in Paris. This is surely the triumphant *non plus ultra* of the mensuralists. Here, indeed, the rules of measured music preside in iron sway. Not only have the old free ornaments of the early church music been rigorously cramped to a formula and all the kinds of metre reduced to a stiff rule of triple perfection, but the quaint old hymns of the church have been crushed with the gay, mad songs of Paris down hard upon a droning, inexorable tenor which, like a fettered convict, works its slow way along. A reaction was inevitable and it was swift to follow.

L. H.

CHAPTER VII

SECULAR MUSIC OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Popular music; fusion of secular and ecclesiastic spirit; Paganism and Christianity; the epic—Folksong; early types in France, *complainte*, narrative song, dance song; Germany and the North; occupational songs—Vagrant musicians; jongleurs, minstrels; the love song—Troubadours and Trouvères; Adam de la Halle—The Minnesinger; the Meistersinger; influence on Reformation and Renaissance.

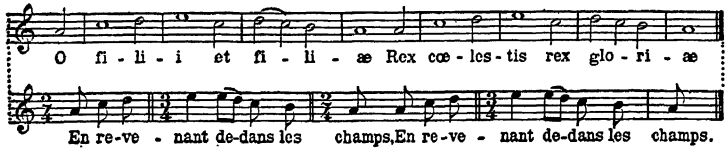
HOWEVER slim the records of early church music they still suffice to give some clews to the origin and nature of the first religious songs. But, when we turn to the question of secular song at the beginning of our era, we are baffled by an utter lack of tangible material. For the same monks to whom we are indebted for the early examples of sacred music were religious fanatics who looked with hostile eyes upon the profane creations of their lay contemporaries. Yet we may be confident of the continued and uninterrupted existence not only of some sort of folk music, but also of the germs at least of an art music, however crude, throughout that period of confusion incident to, and following, the crumbling of the Roman empire.

We need but point to our discourse upon the music of primitive peoples (Chap. I), the traces of musical culture left by the ancients (Chap. II), and especially the high achievements of the Greeks (Chap. IV), as evidence that, whatever the stage of a people's intellectual development, music is a prime factor of individual and racial expression. Furthermore, at almost every period there is recognizable the distinction between folk music proper—the spontaneous collective

expression of racial sentiment—and the more sophisticated creations which we may designate as art. Thus the music transmitted by the Greeks to the Romans, if added to ever so slightly, no doubt was continued with the other forms of Greek culture. The symposias, scolia, and lyrics of Hellas had their progeny in the odes of Horace and Catullus; the bards, the *ædes*, and rhapsodists had their counterpart—degenerate, if you will—in the *histriones*, the gladiators, and performers in the arena of declining Rome. Turning to the 'Barbarians' who caused the empire's fall, we learn that already Tacitus recorded the activities of the German *bardit* who intoned war songs before their chiefs and inspired them to new victories; while Athenæus and Didorus Siculus both tell of the Celtic bards who had an organization in the earliest Middle Ages and were regularly educated for their profession.

I

Because of the fact that our earliest musical records are ecclesiastical, the impression might prevail that modern music had its origin in the Christian church. But, although almost completely subjected to it as its guardian mother, and almost wholly occupied in its service, the beginnings of Christian music antedate the church itself. Pagan rites had their music no less than Christian. Just as we find elements of Greek philosophy in the teaching of Christianity, so the church reconciled Pagan festivals with its own holidays, and with them adapted elements of Pagan music. Thus our Easter was a continuation of the Pagan May-day festivals, and in the old Easter hymn *O filii et filiæ* we find again the old Celtic may day songs, the *chansons de quête* which still survive in France. We here reproduce one above the other:



The midwinter festival, merged into our Christmas, and the midsummer festival, corresponding to the feast of St. John the Baptist, both became connected with masses and songs common to both beliefs; the *Tonus Peregrinus*, sung to the psalm 'When Israel came out of Egypt,' already an old melody in the ninth century, is almost identical with old French secular songs, and we have already observed the adoption of vulgar melodies into 'sequences' and motets.

It must be remembered that for a considerable period Christianity and Paganism coexisted as tolerant companions. The former could not totally blot out the traditions, customs, conventions, ideas, and myths of classic Paganism which were rooted in the popular consciousness. 'All through the Middle Ages,' says Symonds, 'uneasy and imperfect memories of Greece and Rome had haunted Europe. Alexander, the great conqueror; Hector, the noble knight and lover; Helen, who set Troy town on fire; Virgil, the magician; Dame Venus, lingering about the hill of Hörsel—these phantoms, whereof the positive historic truth was lost, remained to sway the soul and stimulate desire in myth and saga.' *

Associated with these myths were the traditions native to the Celtic and Germanic peoples. The very bards of whom we spoke are known to have entered the service of the church in great number, though this did not prevent their travelling from castle to castle to sing before the princes ballads in praise of their heroic ancestors. Of these epics, hero tales, strange

* 'Renaissance in Italy,' Vol. II.

stories of conquest and adventure the nations of central Europe possessed a rich treasure, and we hear that about A. D. 800 Charlemagne, the sovereign patron of liberal arts, ordered a collection of them to be made.

Tolerant though he was of the traditions of his people, the profane songs of love and satire, sometimes indecent, which were sung about the churches, became subjects of his censure; and no doubt the trouble they caused was but one indication of the growing antagonism between Christian and non-Christian, the intolerance of the later Middle Ages. Already Charles' son, Ludwig the Pious, looked with disfavor upon the heathen epics. As time went on and clerical influence broadened, the personalities of Pagan tradition became associated with the spirit of evil; Dame Venus had now become the she-devil, the seductress of pious knights.* This again gave rise to new ideas, traditions, and superstitions; the mystic and the supernatural caught hold of the people's fancy and were reflected in their poetry and song.

Among the earliest epics, of which the verses are extant, are fragments such as the song on the victory of Clothar II over the Saxons in 622 A. D. Helgaire, a historian of the ninth century, tells us that, 'thanks to its rustic character, it ran from lip to lip; when it was sung the women provided the chorus by clapping their hands.' Its Latin text is said to be merely a translation of a popular version, which would antedate the earliest known vernacular song by over two centuries. Of a more advanced type is the Song of Roland, that famous chronicle of the death of the Count of Brittany in the Pass of Roncesvalles, during Charlemagne's return from the conquest of the Spanish march. Its musical notation was lost, but it was sung as late as 1356 at the battle of Poitiers. Though this great epic consists

* The legend of Tannhäuser, perpetuated in Wagner's opera, is an example of this superstition.

of no less than four thousand verses, Tiersot points out that its hero had long been celebrated in innumerable short lyrics, easy to remember, which all the people sang. Many were the epics describing the valiant deeds of Charlemagne himself, and posterity deified him as the hero of heroes in numerous strains that are lost to us. But one of which the music has been deciphered, though with varying results, is the *Planctus Karoli,* a *complainte* on the death of the great emperor (813 A. D.).* Then there is the quaint vernacular song in praise of King Ludwig III, celebrating his victory over the Normans (832 A. D.):

'Einen Kuning weiz ich
Heisset Herr Ludwig
Der gerne Gott dienet
Weil er ihms lohnet,' etc.

('A king I know, named Lord Ludwig, who serves God gladly, for he rewards him,' etc.)

But with isolated exceptions like this one all the early epics were written in Latin; even the early songs of the first crusaders (eleventh century) are still in that language. Their origin may in many instances have been ecclesiastical; written by some monk secluded within his monastery walls, they may never have been sung by the people; their melodies, akin to the plain chant of the church, may never have entered into the popular consciousness. Yet it is in the popular consciousness that we must look for the true origin of mediæval secular music. In folk song itself we must seek the germs of the art which bore such rich blossoms as the Troubadour and Minnesinger lyrics and which in turn refreshed by its influence the music of the church itself.

* *Complainte* was the generic name for the narrative form of song; the later *chansons de geste,* the legend of the Passion and of the Saints, early romances and the *ballades* of the peasants all belonged to this genus.

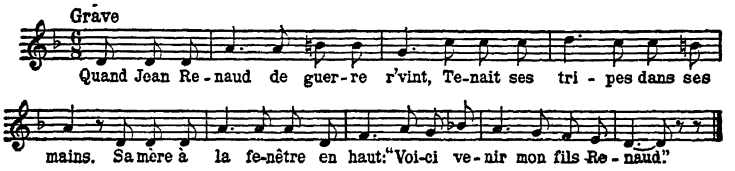
II

As folk songs we are wont to designate those lyrics of simple character which, handed down from generation to generation, are the common property of all the people. Every nation, regardless of the degree of its musical intelligence, possesses a stock of such songs, so natural in their simple ingenuity as to disarm the criticism of art, whose rules they follow unconsciously and with perfect concealment of means. Their origin is often lost in the obscurity of tradition and we accept them generally and without question as part and parcel of our racial inheritance. Yet, while in a sense spontaneous, every folk song did originate in the consciousness of some one person. The fact that we do not know its author's name argues simply that the song has outlived the memory of him who created it. He was a man of the people, more gifted than his fellows, who saw the world through a poet's eye, but who spoke the same language, was reared in the same traditions, and swayed by the same passions and sentiments as they who were unable to express such things in memorable form. This fellow, whose natural language is music, becomes their spokesman; their heartbeats are the accents of his song. His talent is independent of culture. A natural facility, an introspective faculty and a certain routine suffice to give his song the coherence and definiteness of pattern which fasten it upon the memory. Language is the only requisite for the transmission of his art. Once language is fixed and has become the common property of the people, this song, vibrating the heart-strings of its makers' countrymen, will be repeated by another who perchance will fashion others like it; his son, if he be gifted like himself, will do likewise and so the inexhaustible well of popular genius will flow unceasingly from age to age.

In the sentiments and thoughts common to all, then, we will find the impulses of the songs which we shall now discuss. Considering the different shades of our temperament, sadness, contentment, gladness, and exuberance, we find that each gives rise to a species of song, of which the second is naturally the least distinctive, the two extremes calling for the most decisive expression. Now sadness and melancholy have their concrete causes, and it is in the narration of these causes that the heart vents its sorrow. Hence the narrative form, the *complainte,* whose very name would confirm our reasoning, is the earliest form of folk song in the vulgar tongue. In a warlike people this would naturally dwell upon warlike heroic themes, and we have already pointed out the early origin of the epic. The musical form of epic was perhaps the simplest of all, taking for its sole rhythm the accent of the words, one or two short phrases, chanted much in the manner of the plainsong, sufficing for innumerable verses. It is notable, too, that the church, adroitly seizing upon popular music as a power of influence, adopted this form to another genus, the *légende,* which, though developed by clericals, struck as deep a root in the people's imagination. Thus we see in the ninth century the 'Chant of St. Eulalia,' and in the tenth the 'Life of St. Leger,' which already shows great advance in form, being composed in couplets of two, four, and six verses, alternating. Possessed of better means of perpetuation this religious epic flourished better and survived longer than the heroic *complainte.*

Still another genus was what we might call the *popular complaintes,* the *chansons narratives,* which dealt with the people's own characters, with the common causes of woe; the common soldier and the peasant; the death of a husband or a son. Such a one is the *Chanson de Renaud,* which is considered the classic type of popular song. It is sung in every part of

France, and its traces are found in Spain, Italy, Sweden, and Norway. It is unquestionably of great age, though its date cannot be fixed.



This strain is sung through thirteen stanzas, recounting Renaud's return from the wars to his home, where mother and wife await him, only to die upon the stroke of midnight. The mother artfully conceals the fact from his young spouse till finally she hears the news from the boys in the street and sees the catafalque in the church. Her grief is expressed in two final stanzas upon this melody:

the last stanza very naïvely telling of her own death:

'She had said for him three verses; at the first she confessed,
At the second she took sacrament; at the third she expired.'

The music is notable not only for its perfect symmetry and the fidelity with which it expresses the sentiment, but also its discriminating use of the natural and flatted B to produce a plaintive effect. (To both the employment of 'modern' tonality and the chromatic element in popular song we shall have occasion to return.) The 6/8 rhythm is no less remarkable, giving the piece a crispness and definiteness never attained by mediæval church music.

Parallel to the narrative song there developed a lighter genre, as old as the *complainte* itself, which corresponds to comedy as the latter does to tragedy. Its personages are the same, but stripped of all their sombre aspect; its story has a happy conclusion; its subject is not infrequently comic and satirical. Tiersot quotes, in contrast to the *Chanson de Renaud,* an example which is still heard in the provinces of France.* Like the song already quoted, it narrates the return of soldiers from the war, but, where the first has the mark of death upon him, the other returns with a 'rose between his lips.' It is perhaps not so old as the *Chanson de Renaud,* but equally characteristic and particularly 'Gallic' in flavor:

Note the crisp rhythm, the decided major tonality, and the exuberant spirit of the song. Many early melodies show these same characteristics, which at once remind us of that other elemental form of folk music—the dance song, in which rhythm is the essential element.

Rhythm is the feature which most of all distinguishes popular song, and secular music in general, from church music. It is the essentially emotional quality of music which the Christian church carefully excluded from its chant. We have seen, however, how people's primitive instinct causes them to mark the rhythm of a melody (Chap. I) and beheld the women clapping their hands to the tune of the *complainte* of Clothar II. Dependent upon simple formulas which

* Julien Tiersot: *L'histoire du chanson populaire en France.*

could be easily grasped and remembered, folk song naturally chose the simplest rhythmic and melodic types. Hence the dance became one of the principal root-stocks of secular music. An element which was never admitted into the narrative form, the refrain, is a distinguishing characteristic of the dance song, and in it we see the germ of the earliest of our modern instrumental forms, the *rondeau*, originally the name of a dance. The dance song was perhaps the most varied in melodies, for the wayfaring musicians of the Middle Ages carried them from village to village and from country to country, so that there was a continuous international exchange.

The rhythmic nature of folk song carries us into another field of speculation, namely, the influence of the people's daily occupations, the close relation between daily life and song in ages when life in its individual and social manifestations could be reduced to simple formulæ. Occupational songs have from earliest times (cf. Chap. IV) been an important factor in folk music, and it is obvious that early in the Middle Ages such songs were closely associated with the movements of the human body in various occupations. Dr. Bücher * calls attention to the fact that the blacksmith at his anvil, the navvy in the street, are striking iambi, trochees, spondees, dactyls, and anapests. He has collected an enormous amount of folk songs that were sung by the woodman as he wielded his axe, by the boatman plying his oars, by the peasant as he plowed his acre, scattered the seed, mowed the field, and reaped the harvest. This, however, pertains particularly to Germany, where Bücher's investigations were chiefly carried on, and whither we must now direct the reader's attention.

To trace and formulate distinctions between the folk songs of the northern and southern nations is a haz-

* Karl Bücher: *Arbeit und Rhythmus.*

ardous undertaking, since the Celtic element which so largely determines the music of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales is also present in France and Spain, and since the wars between the various races, as well as the great international movements of the Crusades, tended to modify national distinctions. All these meetings and collisions between the different nations have left traces in the songs of the individual peoples. However, northern folk song may in general be said to be simpler and more regular in outline and striving for greater continuity of design or pattern than southern. Rhythm is simpler, firmer, and less given to eccentricities. The tonality is usually clearer and minor scales seem to predominate. In the dance songs the passionate and boisterous element, characteristic of the dances of the Slavic and Latin races, is lacking.

The folk song of Northern Europe draws largely upon the stock of topics held in common. Ever since Johann Gottfried Herder, in his *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* ('The Voices of the Peoples in Song'), called attention to the treasures of folk song, the patient research of painstaking scholars has brought forth proof upon proof to show how closely the nations of the North are related, in spite of political boundary lines and other barriers. The recurrence of the same saga or story of ancient myth or hero-lore in Scandinavian song and in German, the resemblance between the German Tannhäuser, the Swedish knight Olaf, the Scottish Thomas the Rhymer, and the Flemish Heer Daniel or Heer Halewyn, make the question of priority seem irrelevant. North and south of the Channel, and even east and west of the Rhine, the contents of legendary song are curiously alike.

In manner, too, northern folk songs have many features in common; an instinctive simplicity of language, a freedom from obscurities and far-fetched allusions, the prevalence of a four-line strophe and alliteration

and assonance which only in time yield to rhyme. The singing of the same tune to an indefinite number of lines or stanzas is common to Celtic bards, Norse skalds, and German singers, and links them to their forerunners in classical antiquity, the Greek rhapsodists. In following the outline of the poem, the melody is usually cast in lines, each closing with a cadence or 'fall'; the lines form groups or couplets, either similar or dissimilar, in the manner of rhyming verse-lines. The first couple of phrases is repeated to give the structure stability; the middle portion forms the contrast, either by being broken up into shorter lengths or founded upon different notes of the scale. The dominant in the middle cadence is of frequent occurrence. The rhythm is simple.

Impressionable and receptive by nature, the German people have always been given to imitation of foreign models and there is no doubt that the international movements during the Crusades and the visits of wandering minstrels of foreign birth introduced alien elements and obliterated some of the original features of German folk song. The pathetic rise of a tune through the fifth to the minor seventh suggests Scandinavian influence; the alternation of major and relative minor may be traced to the same source. Still the German Volkslied has some traits that distinguish it from the folk song of other northern nations. It is more firmly knit, more formal, and less emotional. Unlike English song, which favors a repetition of short phrases, a single figure which, repeated on different degrees of the scale, sometimes makes up the whole tune, German folk song repeats short phrases only to establish balance after contrast or to make the essential parts of the structure correspond. There is a marked tendency to make the formal climax coincide with the emotional, but in this respect the *Volkslied* does not reach the admirable symmetry of the Irish

folk song. A distinctive form is the *'Jodel'* or *'Jodler'* of the mountaineers of Germany, the Tyrol, and Switzerland. Based upon broken chords or arpeggios, it suggests, as do some other folk songs built upon a harmonic foundation, that the German people had an innate sense for diatonic harmony long before harmony as such became an element of musical composition.* With the exception of the *Jodler,* which is unique for its exuberance of spirit, the *Volkslied* is rather reserved and contained in manner. It reflects the serious, contemplative character and the healthy, well-poised temperament of a physically and spiritually strong race.

Song and dance entered largely into the life of mediæval German villages and towns. When village communities depended upon their own resources for work and play, every village had its own musicians. The peasant boys usually played the fiddle, the shepherds the *Schalmey,* while the flute was hardly less popular. In the towns there were several functionaries identified with certain forms of song. The watchman on the town wall (*Türmer*) was blowing a tune on his horn; the 'wait' or *Nachtwächter* admonished the people to observe the curfew hour and repair for the night; and, when the *Postillon* or courier came through the gates with clatter of hoofs and cracking of whips, the rousing notes of his horn brought young and old into the street to greet the bringer of news. The smallest community had its 'town piper.' There was no festivity without song or dance, and the instrumentalist playing for the dance was accompanied by a precentor for the singing and a leader for the steps. The great variety of occupations and pastimes accompanied by song and dance made for a great variety of folk

* The 'cow-horn tune' of Salzburg (fourteenth century) suggests that the arpeggio manner may have been derived from the horn itself, which was the most common instrument in the pastoral regions of the Tyrol and Switzerland.

tunes. From this folk song of mediæval Germany, dealing with the realities of life in their manifold manifestations, one could almost reconstruct the whole life of the race, its history, beliefs, superstitions, activities, social and domestic customs, its intimate domestic relations and its important public functions. The *Tage, Leichen, Tanz, Spruch, Zauber,* and *Wünschelieder,* the harvest, spinning, soldiers', and other trade and labor songs are a musical commentary as illuminating to the historian as any other relics of the past.

Many beautiful melodies still heard by the traveller in Brittany, Normandy, Provence, or the rural sections of Germany, date from the Middle Ages. Their charm and their vitality are such that they have survived the onslaught of advancing civilization for eight centuries or more. They take us back to the time when agriculture was the one great pursuit of man, when in solitude song lightened his labor and in company song cheered his rest; when every custom, ceremonial, occupation, had its songs; when music was a solace to all alike; when that terrible distinction between the lettered and unlettered did not exist. 'For neither in Greece nor in the Middle Ages did it exist; the same poetry pleased all, the prince and the burgher, the knight and peasant.' 'In certain Breton provinces,' says Tiersot, 'following an old feudal law, established in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, certain revenues were paid in song. In one place the prior exacted the tax of "nuptial song" from the newly married on the Sunday after the wedding; in another, every new bride was obliged to perform a song and dance, whereupon the lord would decorate the bride with a flower bonnet, while all the women married during the year danced and sang a song—eloquent testimony indeed of the love of music among our early forefathers.

C. S.

III

We have had occasion to mention the vagrant musicians, that singular adjunct to Middle-Age society, which appeared in every country of Central Europe, in Germany as *Fahrender,* in France as *fableor* or *contraire* and later as *jongleur* or *ménétrier,* in England as minstrel. Gustav Freytag has speculatively traced their origin back to the Roman gladiators, actors, and performers mentioned above, a despised race, who were, like their supposed posterity, beyond the pale of the law. When the Germanic hordes swept away the degenerate opulence of Rome, this class may well be supposed to have scattered among the barbarian conquerors. As once in the arena, they now stood before the huts of Frankish chieftains, performing their tricks and piping strange tunes. To the populace of the Middle Ages they were welcome guests, for they provided the one means of artistic entertainment outside the church.

In Germany the *fahrende Sänger* or *Spielmann,* whether a native who had travelled in many lands or a singer of foreign birth, was sure to find his way into the remotest huts of the countryside. He brought with him new tunes and took with him those that he heard at the fireside that had given him hospitality. In this way the stock of tunes handed down from father to son and from mother to daughter was in every generation enlarged by acquisitions from without. The minstrel was the medium of musical exchange between the town and the country, between the several provinces and between different nations. He was the middleman and the teacher, through whom echoes of the songs of Norse skalds, Welsh and Irish bards, and French and Provençal singers reached the German people and *vice versa.* He was especially popular in

England, where numerous instances are quoted of minstrels appearing at royal weddings and other great functions, not only individually but in large numbers, and being so richly rewarded for their services that the church complained because they were better paid than priests. Individual German sovereigns also seem to have appreciated their skill and distinguished them by marks of favor. In 1355 Emperor Charles IV appointed one Johann der Fiedler *'rex omnium histriorum'* for the archbishopric of Mayence, and thirty years later another minstrel, the piper Brachte, bore the official title *Künig der farenden Lüte* (King of the wayfarers).

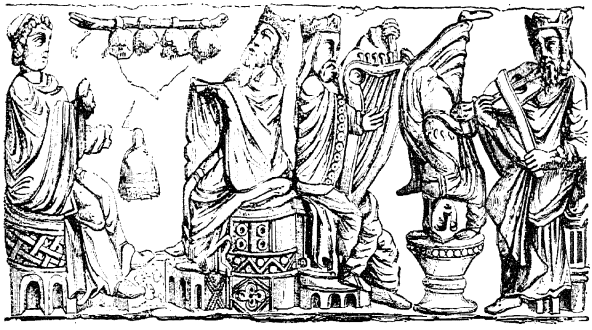
In France, too, the vagrant appears as the original type of popular singer. He ran from one end of the land to the other. Received and even invited by the great lords he went from castle to castle, his head filled with songs, or his pockets with parchments—if, indeed, he could read. Perchance he would stop in the common of some village, play a few stray *arpeggios* on his viol, and, having collected an enthusiastic audience, sing a *complainte,* the adventures of a favorite hero, or perhaps recount the story of a celebrated crime, embellished with horrifying details. Again he might sing a love romance, or even a scriptural *légende*—the 'Prodigal Son' or some other parable, the life of a saint, or the Passion of our Lord.

With the growth of the cities and the development of the middle class the wandering minstrel lost popularity in Germany, even among the people. His itinerant life bred a disregard of social customs and conventions which caused no little concern among the respectable burghers of larger communities, and both the *Sachsenspiegel* and the *Schwabenspiegel,* chronicles of the thirteenth century, record the fact that minstrels were outside the social pale and even excluded from membership in the church. Yet these same outcasts

of the church, excluded from its sacraments, would gather the faithful in the cathedral square and, exciting the people's fancy with sacred legends and miracles, would, as it were, become the self-appointed allies of the clergy. But at last, in uncompromising opposition to them, the resident musicians of the towns associated themselves in the manner of guilds and monopolized the privilege of furnishing music for public functions, being employed and paid by the city councils. The earliest musicians' guild of this kind was the *Nikolaibrüderschaft* (Brotherhood of St. Nicholas), organized in Vienna in 1288. Its management was entrusted to a high official, the *Musikantenvogt,* later *Oberspielgraf,* who represented the highest tribunal in matters of music. The policy of these musicians' guilds was similar to that of musicians' unions of the present day. In a district covered by the guilds only persons enrolled as paying members were allowed to play or sing for money.

It was different in France. Here the *jongleur,* by virtue of special circumstances, became a privileged character and enjoyed the continued patronage of the aristocracy, for he was an all-important factor in the musicianship of chivalry, which we shall presently discuss.

We have left out of our consideration of folk music so far that all-important element of modern song, the mainspring of lyricism—romantic love. In an age when man's entire spiritual life was dictated by religious dogma, his natural instincts, branded as profane and unworthy, were naturally excluded from the objects of his poetic expression. 'But the church could not completely triumph over Nature. The fundamental human sentiments—above all, profane love—after having for more than ten centuries been excluded from the expression which musical science might have vouchsafed to them, now seemed to take their revenge,



to free themselves from long subjection, to let voices hitherto condemned to silence be heard at last. By the side of the altars where psalms were sung, where the things of the world were condemned, the free and subtle stories of exalted love arose, like irresistible protests of the human heart. The cult of the ideal woman, the mother of the Saviour, the Virgin immaculate, continued; but beside it was heard the praise of the woman of France [of Germany, of Italy]; the subject of another sort of devotion, as exalted and often as pure. The chivalrous qualities of the race, disciplined and refined by Christian dogma, but rebelling against asceticism, reappeared and reclaimed their rights with a new vivacity.' * This new spirit pervaded all classes of society. The nobility, especially, now affected a finer, more spiritual manner of life. Christian metaphysics, superior education, and the advanced social position of women were the things which prepared the way for chivalry, that new moral code propagated by formal orders of knighthood. The Crusades and contact with Eastern culture confirmed its establishment.

With this first renaissance of the modern spirit came also the awakening of a new appreciation of the beauties of Nature. Man began to notice the first flowers, the song of birds, the signs of spring's awakening. This gave rise to a species of popular song known as the pastoral—*pastourelle*—which was afterward adopted and cultivated by the Troubadours, who subjected it to certain rules, respecting the sequence of different lengths of verses, etc. Besides the *pastourelle*, numerous other forms of love songs (we need only mention the serenades peculiar to the south—the Basque country and Corsica especially) are of truly popular origin.

It may not be out of place here to quote the charming love romance in narrative form entitled

* Jules Combarieu: *Histoire de la musique.*

Aucassin et Nicolette, dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century, which had an undoubted influence upon the music of chivalry both in France and in Germany. It comprises twenty-one vocal pieces interspersed with twenty prose sections, which are to be read, not sung, as the superscription *Or se dient et content et flabloient* indicates, in distinction from the *Or se cante* of the verse sections. The verse also forms part of the narrative, with the exception of Aucassin's song to the evening star, which is purely lyric but of the same musical treatment as the epic songs of the piece:

The second musical line here serves for thirteen successive text lines with continuous rhyme—another example of this most ancient method of cantilation.

We must now pass on to the development of the love song, which seems to have been the special task of a gifted and celebrated race of knighthood, the glorious post-musicians called Troubadours and *Trouvères* in France, and *Minnesinger* in Germany.

IV

The Troubadours and *Trouvères* (so called from *trobar* or *trouver*—to find) were, in sharp contrast to the vagrant professional musicians, noble knights, who practised the graceful arts as gifted amateurs, primarily in the impassioned praise of woman and for the sole prize of her favor, with such zeal and superior in-

telligence that they soon outstripped in skill their meaner colleagues, who now became their servants. France was, it will be recalled, at this time, linguistically divided into two sections. The *langue d'Oc* was spoken in the south and the *langue d'Oïl* in the north. In the south, in Provence and Languedoc, the so-called Troubadour movement had its inception. 'That glorious land, endowed with all the charms of sunny skies, which surpassed all other European provinces in culture, prosperity, and spiritual contentment, was the cradle of this chivalry, with which are associated supreme sensual enjoyment, a passion for splendor, and the worship of women, thus uniting all the conditions of poetic art.' * Chivalry spread rapidly beyond the limits of these provinces, however, and across the Pyrenees, where lay the three Christian kingdoms of Castile-Leon, Navarre, and Aragon. Counts, dukes, and kings extended their patronage to this knightly poet-band and vied with each in attaching to their courts a brilliant assemblage of singers. The counts of Provence especially, Raimon Berengar III and his successors, the counts of Toulouse, Anjou, and Poitou, the kings of Aragon, Castille, and Leon, the margraves of Montferrat and Este, the French royal court where Eleonore of Poitou was queen, and the court of England under Henry II, the second husband of Queen Eleonore, provided rallying centres. Even the sovereigns themselves were ambitious for the favor of the Muses. The earliest Troubadour of prominence was Guillaume, count of Poitiers (1087-1127). Contemporary with him was Robert, duke of Normandy, the son of William the Conqueror, who, after returning from the Crusade (1106), was till his death a prisoner of his brother Henry I of England in the Castle of Cardiff, where he is said to have attained the rank of a Welsh bard.

* Fr. Diez: *Die Poesie der Troubadours.*

This remarkable and sudden flowering of lyric poetry among the knighthood of the eleventh century, continuing for two centuries and more the record of which stands brightly emblazoned upon the shield of musical history, has never been satisfactorily explained. Riemann thinks that the education of the young nobility in the monasteries certainly had a refining influence. The familiarity with old Breton and British literature, the legend of King Arthur's Round Table, the old Celtic narrative poems and romances, especially the legend of Tristan and Yseult, which were known through old French adaptations, likewise had an influence.

By their own testimony, however, the Provençal poets found their immediate suggestions in folk song itself, as interpreted by the *jongleurs*. The latter's entire repertoire of classic and mediæval chronicles was adopted by the Troubadours, whose own experiences in the Crusades later caused them to substitute recent chivalric deeds for antique subjects. The forms of the *jongleurs'* art we find again in the Troubadour creations, but refined in style, governed by definite laws of poetry, more exalted in sentiment, so that, without sacrifice of spontaneity, they have gained distinction and variety and have become conscious works of art. As we are concerned here only with their musical significance, which, indeed, has been generally ignored by literary historians and underestimated by musicians, we shall have little to say about these forms; for, great as is the variety of their content, we fail to find parallel distinctions in their musical settings. It should not be overlooked, however, that certain poetic devices and ingenuities gave rise to more advanced musical forms, i. e., the repetition of a phrase on two rhyming verses at the beginning of a song, followed by a variant, which is the elementary form of the *Lied*.

The so-called *vers* gives a starting point for Trouba-

dour lyrics. This was the name given to a strictly normal composition in a measure of eight syllables, with probably an amplification of the more sporadic, uneven verse forms of the *jongleurs*. The *chanson* is a more sophisticated form, consisting of alternating verses of different lengths. *Girant de Borneil* (1175-1220) is known as its first exponent. Then we find again the familiar narrative form in the guise of *chansons de geste*—epics recounting deeds of valor—the *sirventes*, employed in a lover's address to his mistress as well as in satire (which is an early prototype of the famous *terza rima* later adopted by Dante and Petrarch), and the *tenson*, a controversial song in which the same subject is treated by rival poets, real and fictitious, in alternating verses. The Breton narrative or *lai*, of melancholy character, as represented in the 'Tristan' legend, was also adopted by the Troubadours; other lyrics are variously designated as *canson*, *canzona*, *soula* (a merry song), *romance* (more characteristic of the *Trouvères*), *alba* (aubade), a morning song, *serena* (serenade), an evening song, and *pastourelle*, the favorite form already mentioned, which is the richest in popular elements—dance rhythms, refrains, etc.

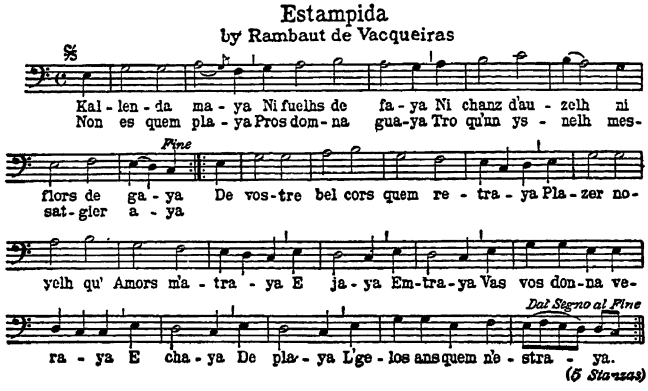
The *pastourelle* is characterized by extreme simplicity of theme. Its characters are shepherds and shepherdesses, and it usually begins in the narrative form, the narrator fixing the time of his adventure—the early morn—and the scene, invariably a field, where he meets a shepherdess 'in the shade of a bush,' or 'at the edge of a spring.' The amorous dialogue which follows has a happy conclusion if the lover be a shepherd, an unhappy one if he be a knight. The sentiments expressed in the Troubadour pastoral are, of course, rather those of knight and lady in the disguise of shepherds than those of real shepherds. Robin and Marion, the usual hero and heroine of pastoral songs, are the central personalities of a whole cycle, the origin

of which is exceedingly ancient, far behind the day of Adam de la Halle, who is perhaps the most famous composer of pastorals. Most of the mediæval pastorals preserved to us belong to this cycle. The famous *Robin m'aime* is still sung, we are told, by the peasants of northern France. It runs as follows:

The pastoral song survived the Middle Ages and was a favorite down to the Revolution, long before which it had, however, found its way into the aristocracy and polite society of cities and so lost the little natural flavor which still clung to it in the days of the Troubadours. Robin and Marion made way for Tircis and Aminta, Phyllis and Lycidas, beribboned and bespangled counterfeits of the original article. To illustrate how hackneyed this type of song and the plays later made out of them had become in the time of Molière, we may quote Monsieur Jourdain: 'Why all these shepherds? I see nothing else.' To which the dancing-master replies peremptorily: 'When characters speak in music it is necessary, for the sake of realism, to make them shepherds. Song was ever affected by shepherds; it is hardly natural that princes and princesses should vent their passions in musical dialogue!'

Among Troubadour dance forms there should also be mentioned the *carol* or *rondet de carol, retroensa, estampida,* and the *espringerie* (jumping dance). Particularly notable is the *Estampida* of Rambaut de Vacqueiras (1180-1270), a Troubadour at the court of Montferrat, the lover of the beautiful princess Beatrice. The story connected with it aptly illustrates the influence of the *jongleurs.* When one day a band of these, native of France, came to the court, they awakened

general merriment with a new *Estampida* played on their viols. Only Rambaut could not be roused from his melancholy, and Beatrice asked him therefore to sing a song himself, and so regain a happier mood. Whereupon he composed the charming dance song *Kalenda maya* in the manner of the *jongleurs' estampida:*



It should be noted here that in the transcriptions of Troubadour songs—and most of the small manuscript treasure preserved to us still wants unfolding—there has until recently prevailed the error to interpret them as measured music. Measured music came into use, we have seen, with Franco of Cologne, about A. D. 1200, but, nevertheless, many writers did not adopt it for centuries thereafter. The Troubadours persistently followed the metre of the verse instead of fitting their melodies into a set rhythmic scheme (and most naturally so, when we consider that they were primarily poets); hence the square notes in which they note their melodies are really nothing but *neumes* on a staff. This use has given rise to the error common to most historians, who, in forcing the beautiful, spontaneous tunes into a straitjacket of modern measurement, deprived them of their rhythmic and melodic

grace in a manner which did violence to the verses as well. In considering their musical quality we must call attention to the fact that, while devoid of the rich beauties of modern harmony, these songs, availing themselves both of the antique modes and modern tonalities, are able to convey nobility of sentiment, passion, and varied shades of emotion. Breathing the 'tender grace of a day that is dead,' they are, in some instances, still able to charm in our noisy age, and the influence which they have had upon the course of the art can hardly be over-appreciated.

It has been mentioned that the Jongleurs came largely into the service of the Troubadours. It is they who accompanied the knights in their travels from castle to castle, providing the lighter kinds of amusement, and the instrumental accompaniment, such as it was, on their viols or rottas—sometimes, indeed, singing their master's songs, with the dissemination of which they were frequently entrusted. That they often undertook to 'improve' these compositions on their own account we gather from the words of Peire d'Auvergne and others, entreating jongleurs not to meddle with their verses and melodies. Sometimes, no doubt, they were more gifted than the Troubadour and provided the melody for his verses as well. In some instances, indeed, a Jongleur became a Troubadour or Trouvère, and sometimes a Troubadour became a Jongleur, as in the case of Gaucelm Faidit, who lost money at dice and was forced to earn a livelihood by his art. For that was the real distinction between the two; one sang for glory, the other for gain. As long as they did not make a trade of their art, lowly-born and bastards took equal rank with princes and nobles, in the earlier periods at least.

While at first the Troubadour disdained to accompany his own singing, he soon learned the art from the Jongleur and in many cases became his own ac-

companist. His favorite instruments were the viol, the rotta (a form of fiddle), and the organistrum.* The quality of the melodies or chords he wrested from them can hardly be conjectured, for we must not forget that of polyphony, still in its incipient stages among the learned musicians of the church, he had no knowledge—not, at least, until about the time of Adam de la Halle (1240-1287), who forms the bridge, as it were, from the Trouvères to the scientific musicians of the Netherland school.

We must now briefly enumerate a few of the illustrious Provençal Troubadours. There were about four hundred poets of fame. The list is headed by Guillaume, count of Poitiers. Soon after him comes the fiery and poetic Bernard de Ventadour (1140-1195), patronized by Queen Eleanor; and Macabrun, the foundling, who wrote—between 1150 and 1195—in a most involved style and generally a satirical vein. Then comes Jaufre Rudel, prince of Blaya (1140-1170), famous for his languishing love-songs; Peire d'Auvergne (1152-1215) the 'master of the Troubadours,' renowned for artistic finish; Guillem de Cabestanh (1181-1196), whose poetic adulation of his lady cost him his life at the hand of her jealous husband, while the object of his affection was forced to eat his heart; Peire Vidal (1175-1215), perhaps the most celebrated of all the Troubadours; Bertrand de Born (1180-1195), famous for his war songs; Folquet de Marseilles (1180-1231), Bishop of Toulouse; Rambaut de Vaqueiras (1180-1207), the cynical and caustic 'Monk of Montaudon' (1180-1200); Arnault Daniel (1180-1200), a nobleman of Perigord, celebrated by Petrarch and Dante; Gaucelm Faidit (1190-1240); Savarie de Mauleon (1200-1230), who fought with Raymond of Toulouse against Simon de Montfort; Peire Cardinal (1210-1230); and Guirant Riquier (1250-1294), the last true Troubadour.

* The Middle-Age hurdy-gurdy.

Among the women—of whom seventeen achieved great reputation—the foremost was Beatrice, countess of Die and wife of Guillaume de Poitiers.

The crushing out of the Troubadours is ascribed to the Albigensian crusade, which lasted from 1207 to 1244. The Albigenses' home was in the very heart of the Troubadour country and the legate of Pope Innocent III, sent as inquisitor, was murdered there during his attempt to extirpate the heresy. The crusade of revenge which followed was particularly directed against Count Raymond of Toulouse, staunch patron of the Troubadours, who flocked to his standard and raised their voices in songs of war and religious controversy. Their *odes, pasquinades,* and *sirventes* were sung by their Jongleurs in market places and at fairs, while they themselves girt on their swords and fought. During a fierce war of twenty years waves of soldiers and clergy swept through the lonely vineyards and gardens, leaving only blackened ruin in their wake. The bright days of the Troubadour were ended; the society that supported him was crushed, and the blow that fell in Provence reverberated through all the land. The race was not extinct, however; its representatives found a welcome at the courts of Castile, of Aragon, and of Sicily, where Frederick II was king. From this last centre they unquestionably exerted an important influence upon the Italian Renaissance, to which we shall recur in a later chapter. In this connection we may mention the interesting fact that the poet Dante early in the fourteenth century visited the Troubadours in their home and drew inspiration from their art.

The Trouvères' ascendancy dates from about 1137, when Eleonore of Aquitaine became queen of France. At her court the knights who spoke the *langue d'Oïl* came in contact with those of the south, and from them received their poetic impulse. Besides this linguistic difference, the only other distinction is the somewhat

more earnest character of Trouvère songs. Among their illustrious representatives we must name, first, King Richard I (1169-1199) of England (*Cœur-de-Lion*) and his *ménéstrel* Blondel de Nesle. Then there are Marie de France, at the court of Henry II of England; Thibaut IV, count of Champagne, afterward king of Navarre (1208-1253); Raoul de Coucy (end of the twelfth century); Perrin d'Angecourt; Audefroi le Bastard; Guyot de Dijon; Jehan de Bretal; and Adam de la Halle (or *de la Hâle*)* surnamed *le bossu d'Arras* (the hunchback of Arras), whose works are preserved to us and are published by Coussemaker in modern notation.† That he was a genuinely inspired poet and composer is eloquently attested by his *chansons, rondeaux,* and motets, in which he also displays a complete mastery of the musical science of his day. The most important of his works is the pastoral comedy, *Le geu de Robin et de Marion,* which he arranged at the command of the king of Naples, about the year 1285. Very little of the music was his own, most of it was taken from the stock of popular song. As a wanderer over Europe, a man of free, wild life who yet had undergone strict musical training in the monasteries of northern France, he is interesting as showing the contrast of theoretical and of actual music and the first efforts to combine the one with the other.

* * * * * * * *

It is difficult, if not impossible, to say just how much the Troubadours and the Trouvères influenced the de-

* B. at Arras, *ca.* 1230; d. in Naples in 1287. His father was a well-to-do burgher, who destined him for holy orders and sent him to the Abbey of Vauxcelles. But his falling in love with a certain *demoiselle* Marie changed the course of his career. However, he separated from her in 1263, and retired again as a clerical to Douai. In 1282 he entered the service of Duke Robert II of Artois and accompanied him in his expedition to Sicily, where he wrote some of his most important works for the entertainment of the French court. *Le geu de Robin et Marion* was preceded by other pieces, including *Le geu de la feuillée* (1262), but they were of a frivolous and even licentious character.

† Ed. de Coussemaker: *Œuvres complètes du Trouvères Adam de la Hâle.*

velopment of music. The Troubadours found a footing in Sicily and southern Italy and influenced the growth of the so-called *Ars Nova,* which will be treated in the next chapter. Melodies of the Trouvères were adopted by the Netherland composers as the foundations of their masses. These are definite points at which secular and religious music certainly touched. If, beyond this, the relations between them are vague and hard to trace, the movements of which the Troubadours and the Trouvères are manifestations are none the less of vital significance in the history of music. Through them the undercurrent of real free music, which we may be sure never ceased to flow even when the crushing weight of scholasticism was heaviest, welled to the surface. They represent spontaneous joy and human delight in ages fettered with theology and logic. They represent the real source of music. Those who would believe that the great Italian Renaissance was not primarily a return to classicism but an all-powerful and general awakening of man to the beauty and delight of earth will find in the music of the Troubadours and Trouvères this natural delight expressed. If, as it happened, music was the last to rise up in the freedom of the Renaissance, it was because music got no help in her need of expression from a study of the music of the ancients; music had to build slowly her own means, unaided by precedent and past accomplishment, fed and encouraged only by the natural love of man's heart to sing, a love which is here attested in the dark ages and to which she finally turned.

VI

We must again give our attention to Germany, where a musical development parallel to that of the Provençal and French chivalry had been going forward

since the twelfth century. Art music as such had so far been confined in Germany to the church; the composers and scholars devoted to its practice were to be found largely in the monasteries. But about the beginning of the twelfth century an attempt was made by poet-singers of noble birth to found a school of secular song expressing their ideals of life and appealing to people of their rank. This conscious effort of aristocratic singers shared with the unconscious achievement of folk song a certain range of topics, notably historical and sacred, and a certain naïveté of attitude. In other respects it differed from it radically, both in content and in manner, for it was founded upon the ideal of chivalry and was full of the spirit of gallantry. But, while the southern poet-singers made profane love their one great theme, German chivalric poetry in a curious way blended the mediæval adoration of the Virgin Mary with the worship of women in general. From this devotion to *Fru Minne* (Dame Love) it was called *Minnegesang* and its singers *Minnesinger.* The beauties of Nature, ever present in German poetry, also formed an important subject in *Minnegesang.*

Though simple enough in itself, this first art song of the Germans never equalled the ingenuousness of the *Volkslied,* for a burden of knowledge hampered the flight of the poets' imaginations and chilled the ardor of their sentiments, and, in the attempt to escape from base realities, they frequently lost themselves in elusive abstractions. The allegorical element, almost absent in the *Volkslied,* was largely represented in *Minnegesang,* which is full of poetic allusions to the heavenly virtues that lead to salvation, and to the deadly sins that pave the road to perdition. *Minnegesang* was more personal and direct than the *Volkslied,* which tends to socialize or generalize an individual experience until it applies and appeals to all. A product of

the castles, *Minnegesang* was frequently a matter of ambition, encouraged by the hope of finding favor with a princely patron or winning the love of a high-born lady. The *Volkslied,* a product of the people, made no such appeal and was its own reward. The tournaments of song were therefore limited to the *Minnesinger* and represented a counterpart of those other contests which in the period of chivalry brought out physical prowess and skill.

There is an element of partisan controversy in the writings of even recent historians concerning the respective merits of the Troubadours and Minnesinger, some maintaining the superiority and originality of the latter, while others, like Combarieu, call them simply 'imitators' of the Troubadours. The fact that they appeared somewhat later is not sufficient evidence for such a statement, however, and may be explained by the fact that in Germany chivalry flourished later. The German knights, it will be remembered, did not participate in the first Crusade. Doubtless the same influences making for exalted expression were at work in both countries and the early epics of which we have spoken were in a sense the common property of both. Moreover, the epic poems of the Celtic people (the Breton *lais,* etc.) preceded the Provençal lyrics and probably reached Germany by direct road.

A fundamental difference between the two schools, which strongly argues a separate origin, is the fact that in form *Minnegesang* approached the heavier epic style of the Northern bards, rather than the lighter lyric vein of the Southern singers. Inasmuch as German poetry contained a great variety of verse-forms with a varying.number of syllables, *Minnegesang* developed a great variety of rhythms. Unlike Romance lyricism, German composition never forsook the principle of *accentuation* for the sake of mere syllabic proportion (enumeration). In other words, the Germans considered only

the accented syllables, subordinating the unaccented so that they might be either eliminated or increased in number without disturbing the rhythmic contour; which means a very different relation between text and melody. Melody corresponding with verbal accent makes for correct emphasis and a natural and logical declamation.

The stereotyped contour of the Troubadour songs which their composers sought to overcome by excessive melodic ornament is not found to the same extent in *Minnegesang,* where the change of hypermetres and catalectics provides in itself a considerable variety of rhythm even where the same melody is retained for a succession of stanzas. This sort of adaptation must have required considerable skill in execution; it has, moreover, given no end of trouble to modern transcribers in the determination of phrase limits. In the example here given we follow the interpretation of Riemann. It is an excerpt from the Jena manuscript, being the only example dating from the twelfth century. Its author is 'old *Spervogel,*' and its serious contemplative character will illustrate the difference between the works of Troubadours and Minnesinger. We give only the first line of the melody in four of the thirteen forms which it assumes over the various texts of succeeding verses.

A form especially cultivated by the Minnesinger was the aubade (*Tagelied*) which originated with the Provençal Troubadours. In its German form it usually represents a lover, lingering near his beloved, whom the watchman's trumpet call announcing the dawn's approach speeds on his homeward way. In the earliest known *Tagelied,* by Diet von Eist (1180), the song of a bird is heard instead of the watchman's call, but in later examples the horn-call assumes greater prominence and is even represented by a melody without text at the beginning or in the middle of a verse. In one by Wizlaw such a sequence of apparently superfluous notes at the end of the first verse puzzled transcribers until recently, when its significance was discovered. In subsequent verses of this example words are supplied for the notes of the call.

The 'instrumental' portions may perhaps have been hummed in imitation of the horn, but the principle is the same. Still later we find examples, such as the *Nachthorn* and *Taghorn* of the Monk of Salzburg, which are marked *Auch gut zu blasen* ('Also good for blowing').

* * * * * * * *

One of the early names of Minnesingers is that of Tannhauser, or Tannhäuser, who was born between 1210 and 1220. To him is credited a Busslied (song of penitence), but it was probably in existence long be-

fore, customary among penitents, and only later ascribed to him. The participation of Tannhäuser in the song tournament of the Wartburg as represented in the Wagner opera, is obviously a dramatic license of the composer, as the event took place before his birth, in 1208. One of the most striking figures is Nithart von Riuwenthal, who endeavored to infuse new life into the courtly formalism of *Minnegesang* by drawing upon the folk song and folk dance.* He called the new genre which he created, and which was a mild parody upon the peasant tunes then popular in rural Austria and Bavaria, *dörperliche singen* (village singing), in contrast to the *höfische singen* (courtly singing) of this class. His dance songs differ from other Minnesinger's lyrics in their syllabic structure, as of necessity their pronounced rhythm did not admit superfluous syllables. The melodic correspondence between rhyming verses already noted in Troubadour *chansons* is a prominent feature with Nithart, but more remarkable than this is the fine imitation of melodic elements corresponding to short rhyming lines within simple verses (*Stollen* or *Abgesang*).

* The terms *Tanzwise* and *Tanzlitet* are attached to not a few songs of Minnesingers, notably to those of Ulrich von Lichtenstein and Reinmar der Fiedler.

Wizlaw von Rügen, another Minnesinger who tried to leave the beaten path, showed a marked tendency toward a more direct and faithful reflection of the emotional contents of his song. His *senende claghe* (longing complaint), in which he emulates what he refers to as the *senende wise* (melody) of the untutored man, is an evidence of the attempt of Minnesinger at 'characterization,' and we frequently meet with such specific names of *Töne* or *Weisen,* which indicate the intention to convey an individual sentiment in melody. The apparent sameness in many of the tunes seems less insistent when we consider the question of *tempo* which must have differentiated their performance, but which was never indicated in the manuscripts.

Hermann der Damen and Heinrich von Meissen, surnamed *Frauenlob* for his songs in praise of women, were famous for their *Leiche,* allegorical sacred songs on the order of the 'sequences,' with melodies strictly adapted to a text, consisting of irregular stanzas with little repetition. Of the songs of the two greatest Minnesinger, Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide, only the poems exist: the melodies passing for theirs are of doubtful origin.

The greatest patrons of *Minnegesang* among the sovereigns of Germany were the Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa), who died in 1190; Conradin, the last of the Hohenstauffen, who died 1268; and Wenceslaus of Bohemia, a contemporary of Conradin. Minnegesang was not to the same extent as Troubadour poetry a courtly art, yet the castles of these sovereigns naturally became centres of development, as did also the courts of the Austrian dukes, when Heinrich von Melk, der Küremberger, Dietmar von Eist and Nithart (Neidhart) held forth; the courts of the margraves of Bavaria and Swabia, where we find the margrave of Rietenburg, Meinloh von Seveningen, Spervogel, and Reinmer von Zweter; and finally the castle of the landgrave

of Thuringia, which boasted of such bright ornaments as Tannhäuser, Heinrich von Veldecke, Walter von der Vogelweide, and Wolfram von Eschenbach, of whom the last two have attained the rank of national poets. The formal, stately character of Minnesong prevented its becoming as popular as the Troubadour song in France. Another reason for this is the fact that the more pronounced caste feeling of the Germans forbade them to enlist the assistance of musicians of inferior station. Whatever accompaniment there may have been was provided by the poet-singers themselves.

VII

With the decline of feudalism and chivalry and the development of the industries the middle class acquired a social prominence which roused dormant ambitions and developed latent abilities. The craftsmen had formed societies with strictly graded membership, a most elaborate set of statutes and rigid ceremonial of initiation. They were as much a social as an intellectual manifestation being developed to mutual improvement and recreation, and music entered largely into their program. Association with Minnesingers who were not of noble rank and who, instead of bearing the title *Ritter* (knight), were called *Meister* (masters), gradually awakened the desire of the good burghers to emulate the example of the aristocracy and cultivate song in the manner of *Minnegesang.* The story that Emperor Otto I was founder of *Meistergesang* (master song), and gave to twelve masters, among them Heinrich Frauenlob, Barthel Regenbogen, and Klingsohr, something like a charter, has long been proved a myth, since the emperor and these personages were not even contemporaries. But the fact that Frauenlob, who was one of the last Minnesingers, is claimed as one of

the founders of *Meistergesang,* shows how closely the latter followed upon the former. There is little doubt, however, that the master-song was first cultivated in a *Meistersingschule* (school of master song) in Mayence, whence it spread to other cities, foremost among them Nuremburg, Augsburg, Regensburg, Ulm, and Munich.

The *Meistersingschulen* recruited their members from the singing-schools of the artisan guilds. Candidates were subjected to a rigorous examination and had to account not only for their previous life, their family connections, moral standing, and religious convictions, but had to pledge themselves to hold the ideal of their art, to live a pure and worthy life, and to be loyal and helpful to the fellow-members of the school. There were 'school-friends,' 'scholars,' 'poets,' and 'singers.' Above them in rank were four *Merker*—markers or judges; one of whom had to compare the text of the song with the scriptural passage upon which it was founded, while the second judged the syllabic accent, the third the rhyme, and the fourth the tune. The highest grade was that of *Meister,* a title conferred upon him who was capable of fixing the standard of both text and music. Prize contests were a feature of the public performances and carried on the tradition of the song tournament of chivalry. The meetings were held in church. The prize consisted of a string of ornamental coins, a bunch of artificial flowers, or the permission at the end of the meeting to stand at the church door and receive from the parting audience a fee in current coin. The spirit of mediæval artisan life and of scholastic formalism was paramount in the organization and all its activities. It is admirably reflected in Richard Wagner's *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* where, embodied in the figure of Beckmesser, the *Merker* becomes the type of the pedant who rates the letter higher than the spirit.

As religion was foremost in men's minds at that

period, *Meistergesang* dealt at first mainly with religious topics and turned out prosy biblical paraphrases with numerous historical and allegorical allusions. The versification followed closely the models of the *Minnegesang*, the structure of the masters' strophes being almost identical with that of their aristocratic compatriots. Even the terms *Weise* and *Ton* used by the later Minnesingers to denote metre and melody, were adopted by the master singers. The song itself was in the form of a so-called *Bar;* its parts were *Gesätze;* each *Gesatz* consisted of two *Stollen* (strophe and antistrophe) sung to the same melody; then followed a Stollen in the tune of the last Gesatz. The rules governing the composition of these songs were called *Tabulatur.* The verse-form or *Ton* was given special names, such as the *lange Ton* or *graue Ton,* or suggesting the contents, were called *Beerweis, Brunnenweis, Blutton, Lindenschmidtton,* or named after the authors, as *Regenbogenton, Schilherton,* etc. Frauenlob was held in such esteem by the greatest of the mastersingers, that Hans Sachs himself wrote some twenty-five songs or more in the *Frauenlobton.* Although the structure of these songs was hidebound in formal restrictions, the spirit reflected a sturdy sincerity which was in keeping with the racial temperament of the singers and not without charm.

Few manuscripts of the Meistersingers contain the music of the songs, and their notation is not always reliable. They employed neumes, like the Minnesingers before them, but they limited themselves almost exclusively to semibreves, reserving the minims only for the ornamental figures. These figures, called *Blumen* * (flowers, *fiorituri*) when inserted as an interlude or at the final cadence made a pleasing effect, in con-

* The *Blume* was sometimes applied to the first syllable of a song when it was probably intended to prepare the mood, but produced a rather ludicrous effect. Even Hans Sachs begins his song *Drey frummer König Juda* with a *Blume* of ten notes, all on the word *drey.*

trast to the even movement of the melody which, without any perceptible rhythmic division, was likely to be monotonous. Recent musical authorities, among them Riemann, incline to the opinion that the mastersingers' melodies were far better than the reputation they enjoy. While some writers claim that they accompanied their songs on the harp, the violin, lute, or zither, others make no mention whatever of instrumental accompaniment, and Genée, in his book on Hans Sachs and his time, distinctly states that they were sung without accompaniment.*

Among the most famous Meistersingers were Heinrich Frauenlob (mentioned above), Hans Foltz, Hans Rosenplüt, Konrad Nachtigall, Konrad Murner, Michel Behaim, Jörg Schilher, Bartel Regenbogen, Heinrich von Ueglin, and Muskatblüt. But far above his colleagues towers Hans Sachs, the shoemaker poet of Nuremberg. His achievements as poet, dramatist, and musician are uneven in quality; his farces assure him of a more prominent place in German literature than the rank accorded to him in musical history for his setting of the psalms. But taken as a whole his personality typifies what was best in the art of his class at that period—an art practised under conditions which did not favor the free and bold flight of creative genius. It was Hans Sach who first of all the mastersingers openly espoused the cause of the new church by greeting the appearance of Luther in his famous song, *Die Wittenbergisch Nachtigall.* In his naïve, sincere devotion to the new creed he undertook also to 'revise' some of the older master songs to make them conform to the new spirit, and his contributions to Protestant church music were highly esteemed by his contemporaries.

Individual impulse, both emotional and musical, being curbed by rigid rules, *Meistergesang* was a less direct expression of personality than *Minnegesang,*

* R. Genée: *Hans Sachs und seine Zeit.*

and a less frank reflection of sentiment than the *Volkslied.* Lacking spontaneity and wider human appeal, it fostered a spirit of severe formalism which could not have much influence upon the development of music in general. On the other hand, this formalistic severity imparted a technical and spiritual discipline which was not to be undervalued, and the stress laid upon a serious and dignified attitude toward the art of music may have done no little toward counterbalancing the frivolous tendencies which sprang up here and there during the religious, social, and political unrest of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Nor was the relation between *Meistergesang* and the Reformation without influence upon the development of Protestant church music. For in the slow and measured movement of the songs, dealing with sacred themes and sung *unisono* by the members of the *Singschule* at the opening of their meetings, one can recognize an essential feature of the Protestant Chorale.

Thus we may conclude with the statement that the real value to posterity of the art movements we have discussed lies in their influence upon the two great social movements that signalize the dawn of the modern era, namely, the Renaissance in Italy and the Reformation in Germany, both of which are again reflected in the music of a later day. The new spirit is echoed in the sublime words of Hans Sachs:

'Awake! Draws nigh the break of day,
I hear upon the hawthorn spray
A bonny little nightingale.
Her song resounds through hill and dale.
The night descends the Western sky,
And from the East the dawn draws nigh.
With red ardor the flush of day
Breaks through the cloud banks, dull and gray.' *

A. v. E.

* From the English translation of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg,* by Frederick Corder.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RISE OF THE NETHERLAND SCHOOLS

The Netherland style; the Ars Nova; Machault and the Paris school; the papal ban on figured music—The Gallo-Belgian school; early English polyphony; John Dunstable; Dufay and Binchois; other Gallo-Belgians—Okeghem and his school—Josquin des Près; merits of the Netherland schools.

I

We have already discussed the origins of polyphony and the condition of secular popular music in the dim periods of the Middle Ages. We shall confine ourselves in this chapter for the most part to the development of polyphony, the art of music within the church, not because it was only within the church that polyphony was perfected, but because the art can be most easily and consistently traced in church music. None of the great composers whose importance we shall discuss restricted himself only to religious music, but all gave the greater part of their energy thereto, and most of the available knowledge of music from 1300 to 1600 is related to the church. It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that secular music exerted a vigorous influence upon ecclesiastical music, an influence constantly combatted by the church authorities, yet constantly triumphant. The two styles acted and reacted upon each other in a manner which may be observed at various periods of musical history.

The study of the development of music from 1300 to 1600 is largely the study of the art or science of polyphony. Polyphony, or counterpoint, is primarily the

art of combining two or more voice parts so that they shall maintain their independent character and individual interest, and still harmonize with each other. Early musical notes were written as dots, or points, one voice under or *against* another, whereby the term *contra punctum*, meaning simply note against note, originated. As has been previously explained, the first or more important melody, called subject, theme, or *cantus firmus*, was generally placed in the tenor, so called from *tenere* (to hold), on account of its holding the melody: and the addition of one or more melodies to the cantus firmus, or theme, under strict rules and regulations, is the art of counterpoint.*

One of the most important devices for enhancing interest in the principal melody is known as 'imitation'; that is, the repetition of a theme or phrase, or parts thereof, either at a different pitch from the original, or in a different voice part, with or without rhythmic or other modifications, which, however, must not be so great as to destroy the resemblance. Combining, as it does, variety with unity of impression, and offering the composer opportunity for the display of great ingenuity, the art of imitation grew rapidly in importance, and became one of the chief and most characteristic beauties of polyphonic writing.† To trace the growth

* Strict or plain counterpoint is divided into several species: (1) note against note, there being one note in the accompanying melody or melodies to one note of the cantus firmus; (2) two notes against one; (3) three, four, or more notes against one; (4) syncopated; (5) florid or figured, in which the added parts are free. Counterpoint is single, or simple, when the added part is uniformly above or below the cantus; *double* when the added part is so constructed as to be usable either above or below the cantus by a uniform transposition of an octave, a tenth, or some other interval; and *triple*, or *quadruple*, when three or four melodies are so fitted as to be mutually interchangeable with one another by transposition.

† Imitation is *strict* when the succession of intervals is identical in both antecedent and consequent; *free* when some modification of the one appears in the other. Imitation is called *augmented* when the rhythmic value of the several tones is systematically increased, as, for example, when quarter-notes are represented by half-notes; *diminished* when the rhythmic value of the several notes is lessened; *inverted* (or imitation in contrary motion) when every upward interval in the antecedent is represented in

of that style of writing, which has been called the Netherland style, is our present purpose.

In Chapter VI we traced the beginnings of polyphony in the stiff organum, and the growth of the so-called mensural system by which all music was reduced to triple rhythm and bound by mathematical laws, indifferent to beauty, relentlessly rigid and monotonous. During this period the musical centre of Europe was Paris, where the organists of Notre Dame were the most influential composers. Here the reaction against the system found voice in theoretical discussion, though this again was probably only the reflection of what had been going on in actual practice, both in France and elsewhere. Indeed, it is claimed by some writers (notably Riemann) that certain composers of Florence, under the direct influence of Troubadour song, were the first to throw off the fetters of musical dogma; England, too, has a serious claim for priority in the new movement,* which was influenced everywhere by the spontaneous florescence of secular song. But the name *ars nova*, by which the reform was designated by its protagonists in contradistinction to the *ars antiqua* of their Franconian predecessors, has led historians to connect it with the probable author of the treatise entitled 'The Ars Nova.' Philippe de Vitry, bishop of Meaux (1290-1361), is said to be the author of this treatise, as well as of several others dealing with measured music, 'proportions' and the relative value of the symbols of notation. In it he advocates counterpoint for several voices, rhythmic variety of a free use of chromatic alterations. None of his own compositions has been preserved to us, however. Another

the answer by an equivalent downward interval, or vice versa; *retrograde* (or reversed imitation) when the intervals of the antecedent are taken in the reserve order in the consequent. A *canon* is a composition in which imitation is carried out at some length. Imitation is also the basis of the *fugue*.

* It is in Walter Odington's treatise that the first mention of duple metre is made.

writer, known by the name of Jean de Muris, left several works of similarly radical character. He is not to be confused, however, with a theorist of the same name designated as 'the Norman,' who taught at the Sorbonne from 1321 on, and whose teaching was so conservative as really to constitute a reaction against the new method—the ars nova. This effort toward freedom was characterized, first by the reintroduction of duple time into church music, in which triple time, on account of its symbolistic connection with the Trinity, had long held the field; secondly, by the emancipation of individual voices by means of a greater variety of rhythm; thirdly, by the prohibition of parallel octaves and fifths;* and lastly, by the differentiation between half and full cadences,† which, in homophonic music—in plain-chant and in secular song—had long been recognized.

The introduction of the natural duple rhythm into music written for the church demanded the addition of new signs to the mensural system of notation (cf. Chap. VI, pp. 177 ff.), for it was necessary that singers should be informed whether they were to sing according to the triple or double scheme. Thus there appear about this period new time signs. Of these a semibreve, still called, by the way, *tempus perfectum* circle, ○, signified the division of the breve into three or perfect time. A half-circle, ☾, signified the division of the breve into two semibreves, and this was imperfect time. A dot within the circle or the half-circle, ⊙ ☾ , indicated that the semibreve was to be divided into three minims, but without the dot the semibreve

* Similar intervals occurring between two voices that pass from one chord to another in parallel motion.

† A sequence of chords at the end of a phrase or period, involving, in modern music, a clear enunciation of the tonality or key in which the piece is written. Full, perfect, complete or authentic cadence is the dominant harmony in root position followed by that of the tonic in root position. This kind of cadence is comparable to a period. A half cadence is a less definite closing, used for phrases not final.

equalled only two minims. The three-part division of the semibreve constituted major prolation, the two-part, minor prolation. Perfect or imperfect time was sung twice as fast if the time sign was cut by a line, 𝅝 𝅗𝅥. The second of these cut signs still survives in the modern sign, 𝅗𝅥, signifying *alla breve* time. It appears likely that De Vitry himself was the first to think of using colored notes to signify still another genus of rhythmical subdivision called *proportio hemiolia;* and that he was the first to use the term *contrapunctus,* or counterpoint, instead of descant.

Through lack of actual examples of the period we are unable to tell how thoroughly and readily church composers adopted the methods of the *ars nova,* but eventually their advocacy was of momentous importance. It is true that secular music was the first to benefit by the advance, for it preserved naturally all the elements which the new law purposed to regulate. Hence the first form—that which constitutes the first ground of interaction, the transition to the polyphonic form of church music—was the popular *chanson,* an elementary form of song, evidently developed from the *canson* and the ballad of the Troubadours, etc., which, as we know, were composed for a solo voice with an improvised instrumental accompaniment. According to Riemann this development of the chanson first went forward in Italy, in connection with the movement known as the Florentine ars nova, a detailed account of which we have chosen to reserve for our next chapter. The Italian ars nova, which is held by modern historians to have influenced the French ars nova in various ways, and to have transmitted to it a style of composition in which the upper voice was freely invented and harmonically interpreted—though in a rude manner—by the accompanying voice or voices, a style which by 1400 was fully developed. These chansons were, it should be noted, like their prototype, chiefly for one

solo voice with instrumental accompaniment and varied by instrumental preludes, interludes, and postludes. Purely vocal polyphony in chansons was rare before 1500, though examples of an elementary kind of part-songs have also been preserved, and, as the polyphonic style advanced, these eventually superseded the instrumentally accompanied solo (monodic song).

Meantime, however, the church had fallen heir to these primarily *secular* inspirations and developed under the rules of the ars nova a freer contrapuntal style, whose chief vehicles were the Mass and the Motet, forms whose general characteristics have been explained in previous chapters. Characteristic of this new polyphony is the so-called *imitative* style, whose real origin has never been discovered and which is the distinguishing feature of the schools about to be discussed. The first indications of this imitative, or Netherland, style are found in the works of Jehannot Lescurel and Guillaume de Machault (d. *ca.* 1372).

Machault is the composer of the first known four-part mass, which was performed at the coronation of Charles V, in 1360. It must be admitted that this is not a very good specimen, even of early polyphony. The parallel octaves and fifths already prohibited by musical authorities had no terrors for Machault, and his discords amount to nothing less than cacophony. It is a historical landmark, however, and serves as a starting point from which to trace the development of contrapuntal methods. In justice to Machault it should perhaps be said that he was a much better poet than composer, and his verses deserve a higher rank than this music, which includes, besides the mass, two and three-part chansons rondeaux and motets.

For some years longer Paris continued to be, as it had been for more than two hundred years, the musical centre of Europe. The prestige it had held so long was lost, ultimately, not only through an actual decline of

original power, but through an abuse of the power they possessed. The standards of the old organ masters of Notre Dame, if somewhat dry, were at least scholarly; but we begin to see, in the early fourteenth century, a deterioration, and a tendency among singers to make a display of their ability in improvisation. Canons and rounds of that time, and even long after, were written in a kind of shorthand, understood, presumably, by every trained singer, but nevertheless giving some freedom of judgment to the performer, which was easily abused. The first phrase of the cantus firmus was usually written out; after this a few signs in Latin, meaning nothing to the modern musician unskilled in the mysteries of this art, would indicate the time of entrance and relative pitch for the other voices. Imitation was almost continuously in use; the 'accidentals' of modern notation were but rarely indicated, even as late as the time of Palestrina, and the 'key signature' of the present day was unknown. However, the training of the chapel singers was such as to give a thorough knowledge of the use of accidentals and of the musical symbols of the time. Intricate rules for their guidance were laid down; but, carried away by the flood of new ideas, and unrestrained by scholarly fastidiousness, many of them indulged in liberties which loaded down the pure melody of the venerable plain-chant with inappropriate ornamentations, and often rendered it hopelessly unrecognizable.

In protest against these unwarranted melismas and tasteless innovations of singers, especially of the cathedral choirs and of the papal chapel, the famous bull of 1322 was issued by Pope John XXII. It was not a protest, primarily, either against the popular faux-bourdon, which was generally in use until after the return of the papacy to Rome (1377), or the contrapuntal school, *per se*. It was certainly not against the methods of the ars nova, as is proved by the use of cer-

tain technical terms peculiar to the *ars antiqua*. It is against the abuses of the latter school, the obscuring of the plain-song melodies and the violation of the spirit of church music by frivolous rhythmic variations, ornamentation, and juggling with counter melodies, often of profane character. Many other protests of a like nature came from the papal chair during the next two hundred and fifty years; and we shall have occasion to see, in a later chapter, the result of the struggle between religious decorum, on the one hand, and, on the other, the vagaries of the artistic mind in the throes of development.

Yet it must be granted that the masters of the old French school deserve no small credit for their scientific and practical labors. During the time of their ascendancy the resources of notation were increased, double counterpoint was cultivated, a greater freedom in metre and rhythm was introduced, the several voices became more nearly independent, and an extraordinary degree of attention was paid to the problems involved in mensuration. They failed, however, in reaching a point at which true artistic composition, in the larger sense, begins. 'Of symmetrical arrangement, based upon the lines of a preconceived design, they had no idea. Their highest aspirations extended no farther than the enrichment of a given melody with such harmonies as they were able to improvise at a moment's notice: whereas composition, properly so called, depends, for its existence, upon the invention—or, at least, upon the selection—of a definite musical idea, which the genius of the composer presents, now in one form, and now in another, until the exhaustive discussion of its various aspects produces a work of art, as consistent, in its integrity, as the conduct of a scholastic thesis, or a dramatic poem.' *

It was this very quality of design which distinguished

* W. S. Rockstro, in Grove's Dictionary, III, 259.

the work of the Flemish composers, who, about the middle of the fourteenth century, gained the dominating position among European musicians.

II

With the decline of the old French school the musical leadership of Europe passed into the hands of the Early Netherlanders, called by some historians the Gallo-Belgian School, which flourished, roughly, from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century.

It will be remembered that the fourteenth century was an epoch of great prosperity in the Netherlands. The ancient nobility had lost power, while the towns, with their astute and far-seeing traders, had acquired extraordinary strength. Earlier many serfs had been enfranchised, and thus a large body of sturdy workers was liberated into the independent trades and soon became wealthier and more powerful than the nobles. The trade guilds and burghers were uncompromising in resisting the encroachments both of the feudal lords and of the Church, and were, therefore, enabled to turn their energies toward commerce and agriculture, unchecked by the influences of a corrupt government. Great factories flourished, vessels of Dutch merchants plied their trade in nearly every sea, population, wealth, and intelligence increased. The ancient towns, Bruges, Louvain, Antwerp, Ghent, Ypres, still bear testimony to these days of prosperity in their magnificent examples, not of ecclesiastical architecture, as in Italy, but of splendid structures for municipal and domestic use. It was among these prosperous and music-loving people that the art of contrapuntal writing was nourished. They did not invent or create polyphony, as has long been believed; but they found pleasure in the

fact that the principles of music could be reduced to laws and rules, and the more intricate the rules, the more the true Netherlanders delighted in them. In fact, it was this very tendency that smothered polyphony itself, in course of time; but not before a vast amount of systematized knowledge had been preserved for their successors.

The service of the Pope's chapel up to the time of its return to Rome from Avignon in 1377 was sung in faux-bourdon, or in the still older method of extemporaneous descant. Ecclesiastical records show that, after the return to Rome, several Belgian musicians were among the singers in the papal choir. These brought with them, along with other music, the first masses written in counterpoint that had ever been seen there. Among the Belgians in Rome, in the early fifteenth century, was a tenor singer named William Dufay, born probably in Chimay, in Hainault, about 1400. There has been much misapprehension concerning Dufay, owing to the fact that Baini, an Italian historian (1775-1844), gave, erroneously, the probable date of his death as 1432. Recent researches, however, especially those of Sir John Stainer, have thrown much light on the life and work of Dufay, and enabled historians to understand facts which hitherto had seemed irreconcilable.

According to this recent authority, Dufay received his musical education as chorister in the cathedral at Cambrai, which in the fifteenth century belonged to the Netherlands. It is famous as the seat of the archbishopric of Fènelon and of Dubois, and for its ancient cathedral. According to contemporary evidence, the music of the Cambrai cathedral was considered 'the most beautiful in Europe.' *

It was but natural, then, that the papal choir at Rome should draw what singers it could from Cambrai. It

* Quoted from an extant letter of Philip of Luxembourg to the Chapter at Cambrai.

appears that Dufay entered it as the youngest member in 1428 and remained five years. After a break he was again appointed in the following decade, when he remained but a short period. It was at the time a frequent custom for the church to reward whom it would by ecclesiastical appointments, allowing the holder of office to reside elsewhere. According to this custom, Dufay was appointed to the canonries of Cambrai and Mons, both of which offices he held till his death, though he removed to Savoy about 1437 and travelled somewhat in the interests of his art. He died at a great age in 1474. His will is still preserved in the archives of Cambrai, and in it, among other items, he bequeaths money to the Cambrai altar boys. He is buried in the chapel of St. Etienne, beneath a stone he himself caused to be made, which, though mutilated, is still in existence. One of his last desires was that a certain motet of his own composition be sung at his deathbed.

The chief source of our knowledge of Dufay's early works is the 'MS. *Canonici misc.* 213' in the Bodleian library at Oxford, compiled not later than 1436, a portion of which has recently been explained and given to the public by Sir John Stainer.* The MS. represents the period of transition from Machault to Dufay, including the early works of the latter. They are mostly in the old mensural (black) notation, and show an unusual proportion of secular pieces. Transcriptions and solutions of sixty of them, belonging to the period 1400-1441, are given by Stainer. Most of the pieces are dry in melody and show occasional harsh discords; but they also exhibit examples of fugal form and some crude attempts at expression. They are quite lacking in a certain sweetness of harmony characteristic of his later works, which has been traced to the influence of his famous English contemporary, John Dunstable. It appears advisable, therefore, to consider here the con-

* 'Dufay and His Contemporaries.'

dition of music in England which is thus to make itself felt upon the course of music in general.

Though the twelfth and thirteenth centuries do not, in England, show well-defined groups of musicians working toward a common end, such as constitute a 'school' in the accepted sense, there can be no doubt that the English were ahead of their time in the early days of polyphony and that English music strongly influenced composers on the continent. Indeed a very considerable case for the actual origin of polyphony in England has been made out by recent historians of great authority, and the case is supported by the famous old English canon, 'Sumer is icumen in'—one of the earliest extant examples of polyphonic music. The date of this interesting composition is given by Rockstro * as not later than 1250. It is a charming melody, composed to a gay, naïve poem, in the form of a round, or canon, for six voices, and is supposed to have been written by John Fornsete, a monk of Reading. In some measures the parallel fifths and octaves show the influence of diaphony, while in others there is excellent counterpoint which might have been written at least a hundred and fifty years later. The imitation is not confined to short phrases, but is consistently carried through in the four upper voices to the close, over two independent basses. The harmony is rather limited, the F major chord being in great preponderance: but, on the whole, the canon shows a high degree of skill in polyphonic writing. It is, in short, a remarkable example of the working out of an inspired folk song with two systems of part writing, which, so far as we know, were not contemporaneous.

One explanation of this apparent anomaly is that the composition, originally the work of a song writer of great natural genius, was later edited or corrected by a learned musician. Parallel octaves and fifths were not

* Grove: 'Dict. of Music and Musicians.'

considered offensive in the thirteenth century, and such a learned scholar might easily have let them pass, while lifting other parts of the music to an artistic form considerably in advance of popular taste. It has been supposed, on the other hand, that the composition is really the single accidentally preserved specimen of a whole musical literature, which has otherwise been lost. In support of this latter theory it is urged that the art of imitation, as illustrated in the canon, must have reached a point of excellence beyond anything existing in France or Belgium at the time, and could only have been the product of a well-defined school. However the case may be, the song remains, an isolated but for its time brilliant example testifying to the freshness, vitality, and beauty of early English music.

It should be added that, under the auspices of the 'Plain-song and Mediæval Music Society' of England, researches have been carried on, resulting in the publication of two volumes,* the first containing photographic reproductions of sixty of the most notable examples of English harmonized music prior to the fifteenth century, the second transcriptions thereof into modern musical notation, with explanatory notes. The majority of the examples are written for two voices, and some for three: none of these, however, can compare, in regard to workmanship, with the 'Sumer' canon, which is also included in the collection.

Not until the beginning of the fifteenth century do we find actual evidence of a school, and it is interesting to note the points of resemblance between it and the first Netherland school. Both are characterized by a reliance on the plain-chant melody, by a conventional opening, a lack of sensitiveness to discords, an avoidance of the third in the closing chord, and an absence of harmonic effects. Compared with the old French

* 'Early English Harmony'; Vol. I edited by H. E. Wooldridge, 1897; Vol. II edited by Rev. H. V. Hughes, 1913.

school, however, they show a genuine progress in the abolition of the harsher discords, the use of the third in cadences not final, and in the more frequent employment of imitation.

Representatives of the early English school, it is important to note, were divided into two distinct branches, one remaining for the most part on English soil, while the other identified itself almost wholly with continental schools, and, in respect to style, seems to belong to them. In this latter group was John Dunstable, born about 1390, in Dunstable, England. He died in 1453, and is buried in St. Stephen's, Walbrock, where an epitaph was said to be inscribed on 'two faire plated stones in the Chancell, each by other.' Another, written by the Abbot of St. Albans, is headed:

> 'Upon John Dunstable, an astrologian,
> A mathematician, a musitian, and what not,'

and the six lines of elegiac Latin which follow bestow upon him heartfelt praise.

Dunstable was a writer of songs both sacred and secular. One of the latter, *O Rosa bella,* was discovered in the Vatican in 1847, and is one of the most beautiful specimens of the age. Of the two compositions in the possession of the British Museum, one is a sort of musical enigma, a form of composition quite in vogue among the later Netherlanders. The other is a work in three parts of some length, without words, and is found in a splendid volume of MS. music formerly belonging to Henry VIII. Four sacred compositions, two songs, and two motets are in the archives of the Liceo Filarmonico of Bologna.

Even with these few examples of his work, Dunstable's reputation as a great musician seems to rest on solid ground. More than half a dozen interesting references to him are made in contemporaneous European writings, among them being one by Tinctoris, a Bel-

gian theorist and composer (1445-1511), and another by a French verse-writer, who compares Dufay, Binchois, and Dunstable as song writers, to the advantage of the Englishman. The passage from Tinctoris refers to England as the *fons et origo* of counterpoint, and cites Dunstable as her chief composer.

Absurd mistakes have crept into the commentaries upon Dunstable. One early writer, Sebald Heyden (1540), claimed that he was the inventor of counterpoint, and another identified him with St. Dunstan. These and other errors were handed down by subsequent writers, until Ambros, in his *Musikgeschichte,* set most of them right. Of course counterpoint was not, and in the nature of things could not be, the invention of any one man. It was built up gradually, one school contributing a little here, another there, until a comprehensive system was formed.

In England Dunstable's name was either little known or else it was soon forgotten; for it fails to appear in an important work, *Scriptores Britanniæ,* published in 1550, scarcely a century after his death. From the fact that all but two of his extant compositions are in continental libraries, and that his reputation, during his lifetime, was evidently far greater in Europe than in England, it is supposed that most of his life was spent abroad. Since none of Dunstable's compositions appear in the 'MS. Canonici,' it is evident that his fame was not established in Europe when the collection was made (not later than 1436). Contemporary references to him, however, begin to appear about that time, or shortly after; and it is a remarkable fact that the compositions of Dufay, which are known to have been written after this date, show a marked advance both in contrapuntal skill and in style over those contained in the 'MS Canonici.' In face of the facts that Dunstable was not only an older contemporary of Dufay and Binchois, but that he was also an excellent master of

counterpoint and style, it is, therefore, not unreasonable to assume that he was one of the important sources upon which these Gallo-Belgians drew for their instruction and inspiration.

Like the Netherland composers, Dunstable shows a lack of variety and a failure to adapt his music to the sentiments of the words: but he far surpasses them in sweetness and beauty. His works are among the earliest to exhibit a design founded upon resources other than the plain-chant melodies of the Church. He was capable of writing learned musical puzzles, thus foreshadowing the frequent practice of the Netherlanders of the next century; but he also wrote in lighter vein with charm and purity, and definitely renounced the harsh discords employed by Machault and others. It is with good reason, therefore, that scholars have predicated, from these facts, the influence of Dunstable upon the early Netherlanders, even though, in his native land, we find no trace of his teachings until they were imported later from the Low Countries.

Through Dunstable, therefore, we are led back to Dufay and his contemporaries, and the real significance of this first Netherland school. The writers belonging to it were for centuries buried under the fame of the later Flemish composers, Okeghem and his pupils. As will be seen, however, Dufay is to be reckoned, not only as an important pioneer in the strikingly brilliant achievements of the Netherlanders, but also as the actual founder of a school. Learned and well versed in the musical science of his day, he possessed furthermore that indefinable touch of genius which enables a man to build a little higher than his forerunners, and leave art enriched by his labors. A large number of his compositions have been recovered, among them being fifty-nine secular songs, thirty-six sacred songs, eight whole masses, and about twenty sections, or movements, of masses. One hundred and fifty compo-

sitions were discovered by Haberl alone, hidden in the archives of Bologna, Rome, and Trieste. Masses and portions of masses are in the Brussels Library, others at Cambrai, still others in the Paris library, and in Munich a motet for three voices.

The oldest datable work is a chanson, *Resveillies vous et faites chiere lye,* written in honor of the marriage of Charles Malatesta, Lord of Pesaro, and Vittoria Colonna, in 1415. Dufay was one of the first composers to use the unfilled white notes, and it is believed that he introduced other changes in notation. He deserves great credit for discarding, in his later works, the empty fourths and fifths, as well as the parallel fifths, which still disfigured the music of some of the ablest composers of the early fifteenth century. We find, furthermore, in Dufay a more developed, though not very extended, canonic treatment of voices; and, again, there is occasionally noticeable a strong tendency toward expression, as, for example, in the mass, *Ecce Ancilla,* which is even more interesting on account of its harmonic character. Moreover, after he settled at Cambrai in 1436—that is, after Dunstable's European fame was established—a new conception, similar to that found in the English composer's works, seems to animate his compositions. His dry methods change, the different voices become more melodious, the harsher discords disappear, and the use of canon grows more frequent.

The feature of Dufay's epoch, however, which had a most far-reaching effect, and one which, incidentally, brought the wrath of fifteenth century critics upon his head, was the practice of using in the mass secular melodies in place of the Gregorian cantus firmus. For example, the folk songs, *Tant je me déduis, Se la face ay pale,* and *L'omme armé,* were incorporated as 'subjects' in a number of masses, which were named after the tunes. The absolute invention of new

subjects was foreign to composers of that day, and such familiar tunes, repeated in the various parts of the mass, supplied a familiar nucleus, while the composer's ingenuity found ample play in weaving about it manifold figures and phrases. This was decidedly a new departure, and one that could not be agreeable to the Church. But the new fashion was no sooner set than other composers eagerly took it up. Dufay's pupils adopted it and passed it on to the later Netherlanders, who in turn handed it down to the Romans. *L'omme armé* became such a favorite for the mass that the younger Gallo-Belgians, Faugues and Caron, the Netherlanders Josquin and Lasso, and even the Roman Palestrina, in his early work, made use of it. In appropriating these secular melodies usually only the beginning was employed, and around this were woven contrapuntal devices. In this manner the new melody acquired almost the importance of a theme. Imitation of one part by another, at a greater or less interval of time, is, at present, so inevitably a characteristic feature of every musical composition of a higher order that it is difficult to imagine a time when it was far from being an obvious or necessary element. The invention of this art was for long attributed to Okeghem and his school; though it is now apparent that it was not only practised fifty years earlier by Dufay, but that it was already used as early as 1250, as is seen in the now famous canon 'Sumer is i-cumen in,' which has been mentioned above.

This epoch of the activity of the Gallo-Belgians resulted in the firm establishment of what might be called the Netherland style. Technical ingenuity was exalted over beauty of sound; the use of martial tunes and love songs, some of them accompanied by most indiscreet words, prevailed in the mass as long as the old polyphony lasted; and the art of canon, although as yet

limited and crude, took its place among the indispensable adjuncts of all musical composition.

Of the three composers of this period who are frequently mentioned together by the old writers, two have already been briefly discussed. The third, Giles Binchois, born about 1400, died in 1460, seven years after Dunstable and fourteen years before Dufay. First a soldier, then a priest, Binchois became *chaplain-chantre* to Duke Philip of Burgundy in 1452. Like Dufay, he was appointed non-resident canon of the cathedral at Mons. Twenty-eight of his compositions are in the 'MS. Canonici,' of which all but one are secular. Six songs and two motets in the Munich library have also been recently discovered and transcribed by Dr. Hugo Riemann. Among Binchois' extant works are also about a dozen sacred songs and six parts of masses. Like his contemporaries of the same school, Binchois was somewhat more interested in technical performance than in expression. Tinctoris mentions him with great praise as a composer whose fame would endure forever. It is evident, also, from the testimony of contemporary writers, that both Dufay and Binchois were widely celebrated as masters and teachers of counterpoint.

Another Gallo-Belgian, Eloy, born about 1400, produced a mass for five voices, a rarity for that time. This work, called *Dixerunt discipuli,* is in the Vatican library. Many of the pupils of Dufay and Binchois, among whom were Busnois, Caron, Faugues, Basiron, and Obrecht, became more or less celebrated in their time, and constituted a kind of second generation or transitional school between the first, or Gallo-Belgian, and the later Netherland schools. Growing more familiar with the resources of the contrapuntal method, they improved upon the work of their masters, while adhering, in essentials, to their precepts. Dufay and Binchois, for instance, usually imitated the pattern

either in unison or the octave; their followers used also the canon in the fifth, and carried it out with more skill. They discovered the construction of chords, though they still had no idea of rational chord progressions. Busnois, especially, was a more skillful harmonist than Dufay. His fame spread to Italy, and Petrucci * included a number of his songs in one of his earliest publications, about 1503. Among these pieces is a four-part chanson, *Dieu quel mariage*, which, according to Naumann, is remarkable, not only for the refinement of its harmony, but also on account of its masterly treatment of the melody. This is placed partly in the tenor and partly in the alto—a novel feature for the time—with no disturbance of the free motion and canonic flow of the other two parts. Busnois had also more skill in design than Dufay, actually employing the beginning of the melody as a theme, and building upon it the whole canonic structure of the voices.

The spirit of change was upon the art of music, as it had been in turn upon architecture, poetry, and painting. Dry outlines were giving place to greater fullness of detail, to greater richness of coloring, harmony, and expression; but, even as music was the last of the arts to be affected by the renascent vitality of the late Middle Ages, so it was slow in travelling the tortuous course of technical difficulties which had to be conquered before true beauty of expression could be reached. Nevertheless, even at this time, music was a real art, possessing laws, modes of diction, and even traditions. Though it revealed its youthfulness in its limitations and crudeness it was by no means chaotic. The music of the mass already showed definite signs of form. There was a shadowy idea of key distribution, and efforts to arrive at a satisfactory method of modulation are evident on every hand. The compositions of

* See Chapter X.

the time begin to show a love of variety and contrast, together with extreme regularity in the matter of rhythm. During this time also it is clear that in some forms of secular music, at least, instrumental accompaniments were used. Sometimes songs, and even motets, were played and not sung; again, instruments were counted upon to assist the voices through difficult passages. The major seventh was not considered unvocal, but the compass of both instruments and voices was exceedingly limited. On every hand efforts were made to break through the bonds of old tradition. In these and other matters it is plain that our first Netherlanders had left the Troubadour Machault far behind.

III

The next important advance in the art of polyphony is associated with the name of Johannes Okeghem,* to whom the leadership in the art of music passed at the death of Dufay, in 1474. Like many other musicians of the time, Okeghem was trained as a choir boy, being one of the fifty-three choristers in the cathedral at Antwerp just before the middle of the century. About twenty years later we find him in Paris as royal chapel master, in great favor with King Louis the Eleventh. He travelled to Spain at the King's expense, and later, about 1484, revisited his native country, where he was received at Bruges with great ceremony. It is evident, therefore, that his fame was already well established during the lifetime of the older master, Dufay, to whose mantle he fell heir at about the age of forty-five. It is thought that during the latter period of his life he resided at Tours, where

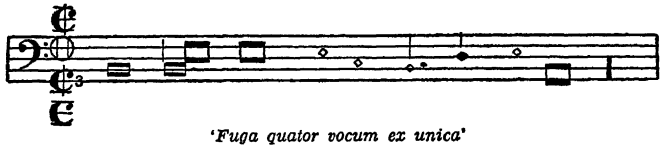
* The form Ockenheim was introduced by Glarean, apparently without sufficient reason. It is supposed that Okeghem was born about 1430.

he died in 1495. It is most likely that he was a pupil of Binchois, rather than of Dufay.

The extant compositions of this master are seventeen masses, seven motets, nineteen chansons, and a number of canons. One mass is in the possession of the papal chapel, and five of the chansons were published by Petrucci early in the sixteenth century, not long after Okeghem's death. The *Missa cujusvis toni* was used for many years in the cathedral at Munich, where the MS., with corrections made by the singers themselves, still exists. Another mass, *Deo gratia,* has become one of the curiosities of musical history, from the fact that it is written for thirty-six parts, with a nine-fold canon.

It may be said at once that Okeghem's celebrity, and his important place in the history of polyphony, rest upon two things: his remarkable influence as a teacher, and the fact that under him and his pupils the canonic style, in extremely ingenious combinations, reached the apogee of its development. Preceding composers had studied and written much about the proper manner of treating two or more melodies in combination, about intervals, progressions, dissonances, mensural problems, and the art of imitation, diminution, inversion, and the like. Some of them had expended their genius in systematizing and classifying the complex rules for contrapuntal writing, and they delighted in setting themselves difficult tasks to be performed within these rigid rules. This was all very well; it resulted in the establishment of a perfected technique and a body of knowledge, the value of which was recognized by every musician with scholarly aims. Okeghem appeared on the scene at a time when the struggle with technical difficulties seemed to be an end in itself, and his genius—of the mathematical sort—enabled him to master and play with them. It is a mistake to suppose that he devoted himself wholly, or even largely, to the composition of more 'riddle canons,' as they are called;

but it is probably a fact that he is most frequently remembered and characterized by them.



'Fuga quator vocum ex unica'

RIDDLE CANON BY PIERRE DE LA RUE

A hint as to the nature of these curious compositions will be sufficient, perhaps, to mystify the uninitiated reader. The mass, *Ad omnem tonum,* shows, instead of the clefs, question marks as signatures; and it may be sung, by using the corresponding accidentals, in any church mode. The thirty-six part mass, with canon for nine parts, already mentioned, is not a 'riddle,' but has all the difficulties of one. In Okeghem's school is found the so-called 'crab canon,' *canon cancrizans,* which is first sung through in the usual way from beginning to end, then repeated backward. There is also a canon which, like the *canon cancrizans,* is to be sung through twice, but from the beginning to the end both times. In the second singing, however, each progression of the original melody *down* is answered by a corresponding interval *up,* or *vice versa.* This is known as the 'inverted canon.' One of Okeghem's followers, Hobrecht, furnishes us even with a canon which has both the retrograde and the inverted motion.

In fact, canonic forms of all varieties and complications were treated by Okeghem and his school to the point of exhaustion. It must not be forgotten that the range given to a single voice was much more limited than at present; that these compositions must conform to the strictest rules, not only when sung in the normal manner, but when repeated in retrograde or inverted motion; and that the very essence of the work was the perfection attained in adhering to contrapuntal laws,

rather than the expression of individual feeling. Okeghem himself made these puzzles but rarely, and, as it were, in the manner of providing an intellectual treat for the educated musicians of his day, especially those who formed the church choirs. These difficult works were a test of their ability and thorough acquaintance with Church modes; they afforded exercise in transposition from one mode to another and offered the charm of variety which the special characteristics of each individual mode imparted. Furthermore, they tended to develop the highest artistry the vocalist was capable of, and were an illustration of the variety of combinations possible with the already existing parts.

It has often been claimed that Okeghem was only a musical pundit; that his works are merely curiosities, depending for their interest on their mathematical ingenuity, and not on their artistic worth. But such a judgment does the master less than justice. Even from the point of view of later and more beautiful achievements, it must be acknowledged that at least some of his compositions have a certain artistic merit. Moreover, the service of Okeghem and his school was one of the necessary preliminaries to the full perfection of the art of polyphony. Technical difficulties were solved once for all, and a vast system of theoretical knowledge was prepared by their devoted labors for the use of the greater masters who should follow. So keen a critic and Judge as R. G. Kiesewetter (1841) says of Okeghem and his followers: '. . . they have greater facility in counterpoint and fertility in invention; their compositions, moreover, being no longer mere premeditated submissions to contrapuntal operation, are for the most part indicative of thought and sketched with manifest design; being also full of ingenious contrivances of an obligato counterpoint, at that time just discovered.'

Besides, the work of Okeghem is interesting as illustrating a certain phase of character peculiar to the

Middle Ages. There was, at the time, a love of secrecy and mystery, which led artists and expert craftsmen to embody the signs of their craft in a private and esoteric system, which no one but the initiated could understand. In accordance with this trend, the writing down of a canon of Okeghem, as has been pointed out, often took the form of a special musical design, consisting only of a few notes and a short Latin inscription. The reading of such a canon was not always easy, even to the initiated: but to the novice it had all the mystery of a Delphic oracle. It was not possible, of course, even for the most cultivated musician, upon hearing such a work performed, to recognize and follow all its complexities. Okeghem was the master who aroused and nourished the taste for these complex achievements in music, though he was by no means their inventor. Such devices, though to a less degree, were already known to Dufay, as is shown in his canon, *L'omme armé*. But Okeghem brought the art to the point of virtuosity; and it is for this reason he stands at the head of the Netherland school. Judged by the standard of pure art, he is at his best as a composer of chansons. Even these, however, have long outlived their day, just as his contrapuntal riddles have long ceased to tease the intelligence or curiosity of lovers of music.

It is by virtue of another quality, his gift for teaching, that Okeghem lives to-day. As the founder of the Netherland school merely, his influence must almost have ceased when the traditions of that school were superseded by the vital enthusiasm of another; but, as the teacher of the leaders of succeeding schools, he has achieved a kind of immortality sometimes missed by greater artists. In the whole history of music Okeghem as a teacher stands alone. Only Porpora, possibly, the great singing master of the eighteenth century, can be compared to him. Kiesewetter says, 'Through his

pupils the art was transplanted into all countries, and he must be regarded (for it can be proved by genealogy) as the founder of all schools from his own to the present age.'

Only a few of his most distinguished pupils can be mentioned here: Jean de Roi, Basiron, Jacques Barbireau, Pierre de la Rue, Comprère, Agricola, Caron, Verbonnet, Brumel, and, greatest of all, Josquin des Près. Some of them, such as Agricola, unfortunately conceived the writing of contrapuntal intricacies to be their chief duty; while others used their acquired knowledge to better purpose. The Belgian, Hobrecht (1450-1505), chapel master of Notre Dame at Antwerp, was probably not a personal pupil of Okeghem, though a zealous follower and admirer. While assimilating and adopting the master's ingenuity, he also was able to weave into his masses and motets a personal, subjective quality which marks them with the composer's individuality. So highly esteemed was Hobrecht in his day that in 1494 the whole choir of the principal church in Bruges, for which he had written a mass, travelled to Antwerp in order to express thanks and do him honor.

During Okeghem's supremacy—a matter of forty years or so—some of the more interesting forms, which had been cultivated in the time of Dufray, disappeared. We look in vain for the mediæval rondo, the ballad, the accompanied secular art song, and the paraphrased church song, with instrumental accompaniment. The contribution of Okeghem and his followers was the development of technical resources and a greater freedom, both in range and style, in vocal composition. His unremitting, thoughtful search for fundamental rules established the art of polyphony on a firm basis, and provided a safe starting point for the utterance of truth and passion. It is the fate, however, of work depending on a passing taste to grow old quickly, and

Okeghem himself probably outlived his popularity. But his pupils spread over Europe and perpetuated his learning, and some of them, at least, enriched the art by a fresher genius. Unlike the old French and Gallo-Belgian masters, who stayed at home, these writers overflowed into Italy and Germany, established schools of instruction, and founded choruses for the production of vocal works. Among them, moreover, was one genius who exercised the strongest influence on the art of music, and deserves to rank as one of its greatest masters. That genius was Josquin des Près.

III

Josquin des Près is almost the last in the long list of Netherland composers, and overtops them all, with the exception of Lassus. The year of his birth is uncertain, but has been placed at about 1450, since he was a singer in the papal chapel under Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84). He has been claimed as a countryman by Italian writers, because his name was modified into *del Prato;* by German, because, ethnologically and geographically, the Low Countries are a part of Germany; by the French, because the Netherlands became a political dependency of France about two hundred years after Josquin's death; and naturally the Belgians claim some share in the fame of the man who represents the glory of Belgian music. The towns of Condé, Tours, and Cambrai, the home of Dufay, and of others, have all been candidates for the honor of his birth; but scholars are now agreed that he was born at least in the province of Hainault, which belonged, during the middle and later fifteenth century, to the dominions of Philip the Good of Burgundy. Josquin had been chapel singer at Milan before entering the papal choir (1484),

and afterward he is found in the service of Louis XII of France, with whom he was a great favorite. Like some of his predecessors, he received an appointment to a canonry, but seems not to have kept the office very long. In the year 1515 the Netherlands became German, and, acording to Konrad Peutinger, Josquin left France for a position in the Netherland chapel of Maximilian I. It seems probable, therefore, that he spent the latter part of his life at Condé, in his native country, where he died in 1521.

Okeghem was still alive, and Dufay less than a score of years dead, when Josquin's fame sprang to the sky. So great a stir did his gifts create in Rome that beside him the fame of all other composers paled. The Duke Hercules d'Este of Farrara, for whom Josquin composed a mass entitled *Hercules dux Ferrariæ*, called him the Prince of Music; and the Abbate Baini, director of the pontifical chapel in the early nineteenth century, says of him: 'In a short time, by his new productions, he becomes the idol of Europe. There is no longer tolerance for any one but Josquin. Josquin alone is sung in every chapel in Christendom. Nobody but Josquin in Italy, nobody but Josquin in France, nobody but Josquin in Germany, in Flanders, in Hungary, in Spain—Josquin and Josquin alone.' *

Fables grew up about his name, as about that of Homer or Wilhelm Tell. It is said that the French monarch, under whom Josquin served, had a bad voice and a still worse ear. Nevertheless, he was fond of music and desired his brilliant retainer to compose something in which he could take part. Josquin was equal to the occasion. He constructed a quartette somewhat different from the usual sort, there being two upper parts in a canon, and a free bass. To these he added a fourth part, the *vox regis*, as he flippantly called it, consisting of a single note which it was the

* 'Life of Palestrina,' Rome, 1828.

king's office to repeat, almost incessantly, throughout the piece!

The emoluments even of a royal musician were evidently not always prompt or large, and Josquin is reported more than once to have given the cue to the king by compositions whose opening Biblical words contained a punning comment on the royal dilatoriness in paying salaries, or whose sacred meaning could be amusingly applied to his own indigence. When finally the king good-naturedly took the hint, Josquin poured out his gratitude in a motet, 'Lord, thou hast dealt graciously with thy servant.' One biographer of Josquin cynically declares that the thank-offering was not at all up to the mark of the petitions.

Gaiety and humor were often in evidence in his music, as one would expect from so witty, lively a character. His work generally shows a careful finish and attention to details. Naumann points out that he takes greater care in declamation, groups his voices for better color effects, and achieves results, especially in the masses, which foreshadow the grandeur and simplicity of the great period of ecclesiastical music under Palestrina. The Passion motets and *Stabat Mater* for five voices are among the most famous of his works. Severe contrapuntal art is shown in the two *L'omme armé* masses, as well as in *Pange lingua* and *Fortuna desperata.* The contrapuntal ingenuity, however, is lost sight of in a genial, naïve quality combined with nobility and ceremonial dignity.

His fame as a writer of chansons equalled his reputation in sacred music. In these also he stands far ahead of his contemporaries, paying more attention to syllabic values, and entering into the mood of the text. His manner is unforced and gay, and here, too, his great contrapuntal ingenuity is veiled by poetical, nicely calculated effects.

Concerning his work as a whole in comparison with

his predecessors, it is generally considered that he is more concise, easier to comprehend, less laden with artifice, and able at last to put soul into the elaborate framework of the polyphonic art. He is the first important musician whose work has come down to us in such quantities as to enable critics to judge adequately of his powers. He was in the prime of life when the art of printing music by means of movable types was invented, and for a century or more his compositions were included in almost every collection that was made. Among his extant works are thirty-two masses, fragments of masses, motets, some of them for five parts, and chansons. Portions of his work have been given to the public successively by Petrucci (early sixteenth century), in Junta's edition, Rome, 1521, in the *Missa XII* of Graphæus, 1539; and no less than seven special editions of portions of his works were made during the sixteenth century. Masses in manuscript are to be found in the archives of the papal chapel, as well as in the libraries of Munich and Cambrai. Besides these, numerous examples have been preserved in the works of Glarean, Sebald Heyden, Forkel, Burney, Hawkins, Kiesewetter, Ambros, and others. The number and importance of his commentators and editors are glowing tributes to the importance of the man himself. With the exception of Lassus, no other Netherland master enjoyed such fame, either during life or after death. He is called 'Jodocus' in affection, and described as 'at once learned and pleasing, everywhere graceful, the universal favorite of the age, welcomed everywhere, ruling without a rival.' Luther mentions the 'Jodocus' as one of his favorite composers, saying that others were mastered by notes, while Josquin did what he pleased with them.

And with all this popularity, even glorification, 'what living singer has ever sung, or what living amateur has ever heard, a note of his music? Specimens

of it are not current, it is true; but neither are they inaccessible. Three hundred and fifty years are as nothing in the lifetime of a book, a building, a statue—even of a picture, so much more perishable. . . . Dante had need of a commentator before Josquin could have learned to read: the frescoes of Giotto were beginning to decay ere he visited Italy, and the beautiful cathedral of St. Quentin had entered its third century ere he first raised his voice in it.' *

The eclipse of Josquin's fame, however, appears not to be quite so complete and thorough to-day as when the above words were written (1862). A number of German societies now regularly include his compositions in their programs, and some of his works have been given in New York during the current year (1914). But no matter how neglected, he occupies a great and honored place in the history of music. Hitherto, as we have seen, musicians had been almost entirely absorbed in the study and application of technical details. Their art was, first and foremost, an intellectual exercise, and its appeal, naturally, almost entirely limited to the intellect. To the modern amateur, good music is that which touches him. He wishes to be conscious of that indefinable spirit which is at once both simpler and deeper than intellect. The greater part of the contrapuntal subtleties of Okeghem must have left the listener cold, remaining in history only as amazing *tours de force,* whose artificial perfection could only be a stage in the development toward something higher. It was this higher quality, achieved by Josquin, which placed him at the head of composers of his time, and gives him importance in history. He, too, possessed the technical skill and learning necessary to the construction of contrapuntal riddles; he, too, was sometimes artificial, and occasionally surpassed even Okeghem in his quaint and grotesque

* Hullah: 'Lectures on the History of Modern Music,' p. 53.

combinations. But such intellectual gymnastic feats were not an important matter with him. He used, and has the distinction of being the first to use, learning as a means of expression, as the vehicle of personal, subjective, and sympathetic utterance. His style became simpler and more transparent, his conception of the text more poetic, and, by reason of these qualities, truth and beauty of expression are his chief merits.

The labor of the Netherlanders, from Dufay to the death of Josquin, offers a spectacle of almost unparalleled activity and painstaking research. It was, for the art of polyphony, the period of youth and adolescence, with its enormous energy, its too great reliance upon intellect, and its comparative lack of mellowness and heart. Dufay was a singer in the papal chapel exactly one hundred years before Josquin held the same position. He, with other Gallo-Belgians and the English Dunstable, added to the body of technical knowledge, established the principles of design in composition, and brought sacred music into closer touch with folksong. Okeghem and his immediate followers were intoxicated, not with the wine of poetry or passion, but with a desire for intellectual artifice and refinement. They expended their genius on technique as an end, and produced compositions beside which even the most intricate contrapuntal efforts of later days seem almost like child's play. Such work carries within itself, however, the seeds of its own destruction, and, so far as it rested upon puzzling subtleties, it was doomed to die. Nevertheless, the schools of Dufay and Okeghem prepared the way and the materials for the third and greatest of the indigenous Netherland schools, that of Josquin. To him the resources of counterpoint were merely the means to obtain beauty of expression. It is for this reason that we regard him as the first great composer.

F. B.

CHAPTER IX

THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Spirit of the Renaissance—*Trovatori* and *cantori a liuto;* The Florentine *Ars nova;* Landino; *caccia, ballata,* madrigal—The fifteenth century; the Medici; Netherland influence; popular song forms—Adrian Willaert and the new madrigal—Orazio Vecchi and the dramatic madrigal.

WE have learned in the previous chapters how music, an incipient art fastened in the bondage of religious mysticism, groped through the blackness of the mediæval night; how, bound by dogmatic rule, it became the object of intellectual lucubration, the scholastic medium of pedants, who reared their stupendous structure of Gothic intricacy beyond the reach of ordinary man, 'that tower of Babel, in the building of which tongues were confounded, till no one understood what he sang nor what he heard.' And we have seen how this edifice, in adapting itself to the use of the denizens, softened its lines and its angles, broadened its spaces and became a thing of beauty—a process in which we see reflected the dawn of a new era, when humanity breathes a freer air; that glorious spiritual awakening which found its religious expression in the Reformation, its æsthetic revelation in the Renaissance. We shall presently consider the influence of the former upon the course of music in Germany; our immediate purpose is to follow the path of the parallel process accomplished through the Renaissance in Italy.

In the words of J. Addington Symonds, the history of the Renaissance is 'the history of the attainment of self-conscious freedom by the human spirit mani-

fested in the European races.' In politics it meant the breaking down of the reactionary forces vested in the church and the empire, in science it meant the substitution of knowledge for superstition, the fearless exploring of new continents and the demonstration of the infinity of the universe; in art it meant the firing of man's imagination, the stimulation of his creative faculties by the Revival of Learning, 'that rediscovery of the classic past which restored the confidence in their own faculties to men striving after a spiritual freedom, . . . which held up for emulation master works of literature, philosophy and art, provoked inquiry, shattered the narrow mental barrier imposed by mediæval orthodoxy.'

Just as the artist 'humanized the altar pieces and the cloister frescoes upon which he worked' and so 'silently substituted the love of beauty and the interest of actual life for the principles of the church,' so the musician 'humanized' the service of the church, brought beauty, expression and emotion into his masses and motets, imbuing them with the dramatic spirit, the spirit of passion, which had never been absent from the *secular* music of the people, the music that is always indigenous to the soil. It is in this music that we must first seek the embodiment of the Renaissance spirit, which means the direct expression of human emotions in terms of oral beauty. That spirit has been associated in the history of music with two things: the 'invention' of monody * and the rise of opera, both of which are placed about the end of the sixteenth century. But recent research has shown

* The word monody may be applied to the purely melodic, unaccompanied music of ancient times and the plain-song era, which, however, is better described as homophony, in contradistinction to monody in the present sense, namely, solo melody with instrumental accompaniment. In monodic music the upper voice predominates throughout and determines the harmonic structure. In vocal polyphony, or counterpoint, the principal voice (*cantus firmus*) was usually in the tenor, and had no such determining significance.

these apparently sudden events to be the outcome of a development extending back nearly three hundred years, so that they become the objective rather than the starting point of our account, which will aim to trace the steps by which this momentous reform was accomplished.

I

Our story has a direct connection with Chapter VII, where we spoke of the art of the Provençal troubadours. Though their influence was not felt in Italy till late in the twelfth century it bore a fruit as rich as it had in France. In the middle of the thirteenth a number of troubadours and jongleurs visited Frederick II at Milan, in the train of Raymon Berengar, Count of Provence. The Emperor extended his patronage to them, as did also Charles d'Anjou, the king of Naples. They became known among the people as *uomini di corti,* and *ciarlatanti* (because their chief theme was the exploits of Charlemagne), and the natives taught by them were called *trovatori* and *giocolini.* These soon cultivated native poetry in the Italian vernacular, the *volgar poesia,* which spread its influence to northern Italy as well and found representatives especially in Florence and Bologna. The thirteenth century records the names of Quittona d'Arezzo, Guido Guincelli and Jacopone da Todi, and upon the threshold of the fourteenth stands Dante (1265-1321), one of the greatest poets of all times, who with Petrarch (1304-1374) and Boccaccio (1313-1375) finally demonstrates the power of the Italian language as an artistic medium. In these three, Symonds says, 'Italy recovered the consciousness of intellectual liberty.' What is more to our purpose, they so clarified and amplified the Italian tongue that it became the vehicle for a national literature, in which were produced not only

epics after the classic models, but also lyric gems in new and spontaneous forms, which would inspire the creation of melody.

Among these poetic forms we frequently meet with *canzone* and *madrigals* (then called *mandriale,* from Ital. *mandra*=hearth), which were evidently written to be *sung.* Their melodies, however, were no longer composed by the poets themselves but by a class of musicians characteristic of Italy during the Renaissance, the *cantori a liuto,* lutenists, who were essentially composers and singers, as distinguished from the *trovatori,* who were poets primarily. One of these *cantori a liuto* was Dante's friend, Casella, whose name he has perpetuated in the *Purgatorio.** The importance of the lutenists in this and succeeding periods of music calls for a brief explanation of their instrument. The lute was a plucked string instrument, somewhat resembling the guitar. Its origin was oriental. The favorite instrument of the Arabs, it reached Italy by way of Spain, and thence spread all over Europe. In the fifteenth to the seventeenth century it came to hold a place relatively as prominent as our pianoforte to-day —it was the household instrument *par excellence* and an important member of early orchestras. In shape the lute resembles the mandolin rather than the guitar, but it was made in various sizes, varieties, and ranges (chitaronne, theorbo, etc.). The number of strings was variable. Five pairs running across the fingerboard and an additional single one for the melody were fretted; the rest running *outside* were used only as open strings. The tunings varied at different periods, and, as in the case of the organ, a special kind of notation, or tablature, was used (*cf.* Vol. VIII, Chap. II).

* Dante's *ballate* were everywhere known and sung, according to Saccheti's novels, and when Dante overheard a blacksmith singing his song he scolded him for having altered it. Dante himself was, according to an anonymous writer of the thirteenth century, *dilettore nel canto e ogni suono.*

It must not be supposed, however, that these lutenists were learned musicians in the sense of the contrapuntists who, at this same period, flourished in the Netherlands, and who had already begun to invade Italy. They were not familiar with the complicated musical science of the time. The ecclesiastical modes, mensural science, notation and its ramifications, ligatures, prolation and proportions, the theory of consonance and dissonance, the laws of voice progression, etc., all combined to form a science so formidable as to baffle all but those devoting their lives to its study. A boy put to school in childhood could achieve only in manhood the knowledge of a 'cantor.' As for composing, he would first have to be, as Kiesewetter says, a 'doctor of counterpoint.' The lutenists were none such; they were essentially *dilettanti* and hence their art, which was transmitted from ear to ear, has not been preserved to us. To gain a knowledge of the nature of their music we must turn to the more learned native musicians, who, we know, cultivated the same forms in the fourteenth century.

Here we meet with the most remarkable revelations. We will recall how music in its course of development under the guidance of the church 'chose a path which led directly away from the solo style of the folk song or the song of the troubadours and into the realm of polyphonic imitation.' It has been supposed, therefore, that the vocal solo had no place in the system and never appeared in the art music of the time. But recent investigators have unlocked for us a treasure of song by a school of Italian musicians of the early fourteenth century who perpetuated not only the solo style, but the solo song with instrumental accompaniment, which is the supposed 'invention' of the Florentine monodists of 1600! Fétis was the first to make known to the world the existence of the precious manuscript of the Bib-

liothèque Nationale in Paris, dated 1375, which contains the specimens of these early Renaissance masters, among whom we should mention Jacopo da Bologna, Giovanni da Cascia (1329-1351), Francesco Landino (1325-1397) and Ghiradellus de Padua. Their worth was appreciated not only by Fétis who, in speaking of Giovanni da Cascia, says that 'Guillaume de Machault, who was the most celebrated French musician of the same epoch, does not show greater ability,' * but also by other historians. Ambros says, 'If their (the Italians') works take an inferior position to that of the Netherlanders the reason is not lack of talent, but the fact that because of a disposition deeply rooted in the Italian nature and character, which later bore the richest fruits, the Italians were to develop certain sides of the art, before it had to be subjected to the indispensable school of contrapuntalism.' But none of the historians were aware of the full significance of this music until Johannes Wolf's † study of mensural notation appeared and until Hugo Riemann's deductions ‡ for the first time placed it in its true light. It is this school, which he characterizes as the Italian *Ars nova,* whose influence upon the French *Ars nova* and its chanson literature we have already emphasized.

The centre of this art is Florence, which Fétis calls 'the cradle of modern music.' Its principal representative is Francesco Landino, mentioned above. The facts of his life are brief. He was born in Florence about 1325, the son of a painter of some reputation. Having lost his sight in his youth, he sought consolation in the study of music. He learned to play all the instruments then in vogue and, it is said, even invented others. But it was his ability on the organ

* F. J. Fétis: *Hist. Gén. de la Musique,* V. 308.

† Joh. Wolf: *Geschichte der Mensuralnotation von 1260-1450* (2 vols., 1904).

‡ *Cf.* H. Riemann: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* I², pp. 305 ff.

that made him famous. In this he surpassed his contemporaries to such an extent that he was aptly styled *Francesco degli organi.* The chief musicians of his time united to bestow upon him a laurel wreath, with which the king of Cyprus crowned him in Venice. He died in his native city in 1390.

What is true of his music applies in a great measure to that of his contemporaries—those named above and a number of others. The three principal forms into which their compositions are cast are the *caccia,* the *ballata* and the madrigal. The *caccia* is the one indigenous form of the three, being of truly Tuscan origin. It is a canon for two voices, with or without a third as bass foundation, which does not participate in the canon (like the drone bass of 'Sumer is i-cumen in'). As its name implies (*caccia*=chase) it is a hunting song, though later it is applied to the humorous description of a market scene. The *ballata* is clearly derived from the dance songs of the troubadours. Its form as cultivated by the Florentines shows at the beginning a phrase whose text and melody serve as a chorus refrain (*ripresa*). This is followed by a middle section which is repeated (*piedi*) over a different text; then the opening section is again taken up with fresh text as a *volta,* after which it is repeated as refrain. Often there are a number of strophes (*copla*) which are alike except for the texts of the *piedi.*

The madrigal, too, originated in Provence, being derived from the *pastourelle.* While the latter, however, recounts amorous adventures with rural belles, the madrigal poems of Dante and his successors have for their subject the contemplation of the beauties of nature, with a whimsical, philosophical or sentimental conclusion. Its musical form is similar to the ballad and *rondeau;* it is divided into two parts with repeats and its melodic phrases are usually not of greater length than would be required for about five

text lines. We shall see later a new development of the madrigal in the polyphonic *a capella* style, which became significant for the development of opera; the present form is, however, entirely monodic and accompanied.

Herein indeed lies the most remarkable feature of these early forms of secular music; in that they present a definitely thought-out combination of vocal and instrumental music, whose existence at this period was until recently unsuspected. But the latest research has definitely shown that the doubtful melismatic figures without words which precede and follow the individual phrases are nothing but instrumental preludes, interludes and postludes. Riemann * calls attention to the surprisingly definite *harmonic* basis of these songs; which seems far in advance of diaphony, *faux-bourdon* and all the primitive forms of polyphony. There is a remarkably varied combination of intervals—octaves, sixths, fifths, thirds, also sevenths and ninths used in the nature of passing notes or over a pedal—foreshadowing the manner of a much later day. Consecutive fifths and octaves occur rarely, and when they do are used in a way which is not very objectionable even to modern ears. A strictly modal character is avoided by the frequent use of chromatics. 'Indeed this Florentine "ars nova" of the fourteenth century has no connection with the laborious attempts of the Paris school. This is evident from the fact that it does not build "motets" upon a tuneless tenor, or construct *rondeaux* and "conducts" in the clumsy manner of the organum, but that it appears with entirely new fundamental forms, and with such a certainty and natural freshness, that a theoretical process of creation seems absolutely out of the question. No, this Florentine New Art is a genuine, indigenous flower of Italian genius. If we nevertheless insist upon

* H. Riemann: *Op. cit.*, I², pp. 305 ff.

tracing its roots beyond the rich soil of Tuscan literature, we can only find it in the troubadour poetry of Provence.' *

According to our authority, there took place in the second half of the fourteenth century an active exchange of the achievements between the Florentines and the Paris school, in which France took from Italy a greater rhythmic variety, while Italy gained from France the manner of writing over a *faux-bourdon* foundation, the result being a decided detriment to the Florentine school, which lost much of its freedom in the invention of independent voices, though it gained in harmonic purity, while of course the consecutive octaves and fifths naturally disappear entirely. Examples of madrigals, *cacci*, etc., of the Florentine school may be examined in Johannes Wolf's *Geschichte der Mensuralnotation.* A notable specimen by Giovanni da Cascia is 'The White Peacock,' quoted by Riemann (I^2). The *cantori a liuto,* who flourished probably throughout the fifteenth century, performed, no doubt, the compositions of these masters, no less than their own inventions and the popular songs of the day, the *frottole,* the *canzone, villanesche* and *villanelle,* which resounded through the streets and the *campagna* of Renaissance Italy.

II

The fifteenth century saw Italy well advanced toward the state in which it has been compared to ancient Greece. The work begun by Petrarch had made mighty strides, the recovery of ancient learning and ancient art had become the great passion of the age, and the worship of beauty was the second, if not the first, creed of a people but recently emerged from the broils of civil war and settled down to a prosperous period, under a benevolent tyranny of which

* H. Riemann: *Op cit.*, I, pp. 305 ff.

the rule of the Medici at Florence was the arch-type. Learning and culture had become a badge of nobility and the patronage of the arts an instrument of power. That music shared in the boon which came to art is unquestionable; a musical education was once again, as in ancient Greece, an essential part of a gentleman's equipment; poets and musicians shared the patronage of princes, who themselves had no greater ambition than to be accounted men of genius—in truth, Florence had become the Athens of the modern world.

Cosimo de Medici returned from his Venetian exile in 1434 and, once installed in power, we see him surrounded by such men as Donatello, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti and Luca della Robbia. Gemistos Plethos, the Byzantine Greek, fires his passion for Plato's philosophy and Marsilio Ficino is trained under his patronage to translate the works of the sage. Vespasiano assures us of his versatility as follows: 'When giving audience to a scholar, he discoursed concerning letters; in the company of theologians he showed his acquaintance with theology, . . . astrologers found him well versed in their science, . . . musicians in like manner perceived his mastery of music, wherein he much delighted.'

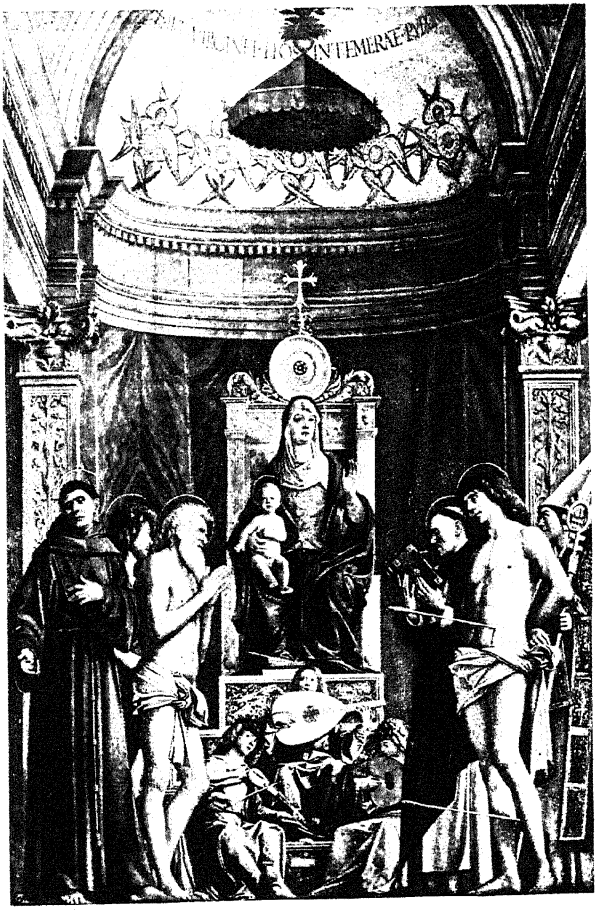
Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492), far surpassed his grandsire in talent and culture. He was a writer of prose and poetry, gave the impulse to the revival of a national literature, and may be said to have raised popular poetry to the dignity of an art, in writing new verses for the *canzone a ballo* which the young men and girls sang and danced upon the squares of Florence to celebrate the return of May, and the *canti carnascialeschi,* the songs that the Florentine populace sang, masked, at carnival times. He organized for these occasions great pageants in which he himself took part, engaging the best artists for the embellishment of chariots and the designing

of costumes, while he himself wrote songs appropriate to the characters represented on the cars, causing new musical settings to be made by eminent composers. 'Every festivity,' says Symonds, 'May morning tournaments, summer evening dances on the squares of Florence, weddings, carnival processions, and vintage banquets at the villa, had their own lyrics with music and the *Carola*.'

Lorenzo's famous academy constituted perhaps the greatest intellectual galaxy of the age, for at his table sat Angelo Poliziano, Cristoforo Landino, Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Leo Battista Alberti, Michelangelo Buonarrotti, Luigi Pulci. Surrounded by these companions we behold him in the streets of Florence, not disdaining to perform his own songs, in the midst of an approving populace, or, perchance, 'when Florence sleeps beside the silvery Arno and the large Italian stars come forth above,' accompanied by a few kindred spirits, lute in hand, singing the verses of a Dante or a Petrarch to the accompaniment of soft Italian zephyrs; or, again, in his villa 'on the steep slope of that lofty hill crowned by the mother city, the ancient Fiesole,' with Michael Angelo, 'seated between Ficino and Politian, with the voices of prophets vibrating in his memory and with the music of Plato sounding in his ears . . . till Pulci breaks the silence with a brand-new canto of Morgante, or a singing boy is bidden to tune his mandoline to Messer Angelo's last-made *ballata*.' *

To such gatherings of boon companions and to the small domestic circle the *cantori a liuto* were finally relegated, for, as we shall see, their usefulness had been outlived. Such men as these were the perpetuators of their art and the last, perhaps, to cultivate the spontaneous monodies of their Florentine forbears, for it is unthinkable that these worshippers of beauty,

* J. A. Symonds: 'Renaissance in Italy,' Vol. II.



these æsthetic sentimentalists should have escaped the charm of that school and have forgone it in favor of that which followed. For meantime the musicians of the Netherland school continued to spread their propaganda in Italy, and so successfully, that their contrapuntal works began to supersede the native monodic style.

Their method had, indeed, undergone great improvement: Josquin des Près and his more expressive style had achieved tremendous popularity throughout Europe.* Toward the end of the fifteenth century these masters cultivated the secular forms more and more, always, of course, in their wonted contrapuntal method. They would frequently take the melody of a favorite folk-song, use it as their tenor (the middle part) around which they wove an artful counterpoint. In Germany the 'harmonization' of popular melodies, or melodies in the popular vein, had been going forward for some time, and it is a noteworthy fact that Heinrich Isaac, one of those most prominently engaged in this work, was organist in Florence from 1484 to 1494 and again after 1514. The style of writing adopted in these popular settings was a simple 'note against note,' which emphasized chord progressions rather than melodic integrity.

Definite ideas of harmony were beginning to take root about this time. Ramis de Pareja, the Spanish theoretician, in 1482 had, by his new mathematical definitions of the ratio of intervals, established the consonant nature of the triad; Franchino Gafori and Ludovico Fogliano (d. 1539) had insisted upon the same principle. In 1558 Gioseffo Zarlino † gave to the

* During 1471 to 1488 Josquin was at the papal chapel in Rome. His popularity there is illustrated by the following episode. When a motet was performed in a distinguished social circle it passed almost without notice until the hearers became aware that Josquin was its composer, when all hands promptly proceeded to express their admiration of it.

† B. Chioggia (Venice), 1517; d. Venice, 1590; was a pupil of Willaert. In 1565 succeeded Cipriano de Rore as *maestro* at St. Mark's. Most of his

world his *Institutioni harmoniche,* which, following the Ptolomean determination of intervals, established the natural relations of the tones of the major triad (*divisione armonica*) and in the course of the century his ideas of harmony became the common property of musicians. With harmony as the predominating principle of music, with 'vertical' hearing rather than 'horizontal' as the prevailing habit, and the constantly freer use of chromatics, the doom of ecclesiastical modes was sounded, even if not fully accomplished till later, and the real advent of modern music had been reached.

The Italians, from early times as to-day primarily and essentially melodists, never found great appeal in the barbarous descant and counterpoint of the Netherlanders. 'But they could not but perceive the charm of harmony, once it had been cleansed of its dross, when composers no longer worked for the eye of their expert colleagues alone, but for the ears of the people as well.' Hence polyphonic music was gradually accepted in the place of the native monodies which had now lost caste, and it became fashionable to perform motets for the entertainment of one's guests. However, the number of native singers able to perform this 'learned' music was insufficient to supply even the churches outside of Rome, much less the palaces of the aristocracy, until the increased influx of Netherlanders as singers and teachers spread their art among the musicians of Italy. During the sixteenth century the simplification of notation made the art of reading music accessible to the *dilettanti,* who now

compositions have been lost. His theoretical works were of the greatest importance. Like M. Hauptmann later, he already recognized but one kind of third, the major, and distinguishes the thirds of the major and minor triad not by size but by position, upon which principle he based the entire theory of harmony. Only the introduction of the thorough bass soon after, which reckoned all intervals from the bass up, prevented a development of this rational theory. (Cf. Riemann: *Gesch. der Musiktheorie,* pp. 369 ff.)

formed musical coteries for the performance of polyphonic songs. Native composers busied themselves to supply the demand and their products were spread broadcast by enterprising publishers, for meantime, in 1476, the art of printing had been introduced in Rome.* The first of these publishers was Ottaviano dei Petrucci, who, though not its inventor, so advanced the art of music printing as to render it a practical medium. His office in Venice produced in 1501 a collection of ninety-six songs written by various composers. Thus he brought polyphonic music to the people and so caused the old monodies of the lutenists and earlier masters to pass still farther into oblivion.

Among the native products of Petrucci's press we see a number of four-part songs of lighter genre called *frottole*. This was a simple popular form akin to the *ballata* and usually supposed to be of humorous content. The *frottola* was essentially a street song, originally sung to an improvised accompaniment, and did not really belong to the *a capella* species. But in Petrucci's collection (between 1504 and 1509 he published nine books of *frottole*) they appear as polyphonic pieces in a manner of the time.† In this guise they were stepping stones to a nobler form which was to achieve immense popularity and, practised by the more educated circles of amateurs, became the 'chamber music' of the period. This was the madrigal or, to be precise, the *new* madrigal, for though the old

* *Cf.* Chap. X, pp. 284 ff.

† The frottola 'stood midway between the strict and complicated madrigal and the *villotta* or *villanella*, which was a mere harmonization of a tune; and in fact as the use of counterpoint increased it disappeared, its better element went into the madrigal, its lower into the *villanella*.'—Grove's 'Dictionary.'

'If we consider the frottole as contrapuntal exercises they appear very meagre. If, however, we consider them as attempts to free the *cantabile* melody, the declamatory rhythm which is analogous to the verse metre, from the imitative web, and as an attempt to endow musical pieces with architectural symmetry in the construction of its consecutive (not simultaneous) elements they are significant phenomena.'—Ambros.

verses of Dante, Petrarch, etc., served as bases, its musical structure had little to do with the earlier form (see above, p. 264).

This, in fact, was the only excuse for adopting the name madrigal for this new type of composition. Composers were weary of the short forms with their endless repetition of phrases and, recognizing the superiority of the old classic poems both in sentiment and structure, proceeded to apply to them their polyphonic skill. Like in the motet the setting was continuous (*durchkomponiert*), with or without reiteration of musical ideas, but, unlike that stereotyped form, the madrigal was the child of free invention throughout, not a contrapuntal exercise upon a given *cantus firmus*. The tenor was not more prominent than the other voices; neither, on the other hand, was the treble a real 'melody' in the modern sense, being the result of simultaneous calculation. The madrigal was the *a capella* composition *par excellence* and, as the secular counterpart of the motet, became the standard form in which the pure vocal style was developed.

III

Adrian Willaert (1480-1562), the founder of the so-called Venetian school, whose activities as a church composer we shall recount in the next chapter, is generally considered the father of the new madrigal. Though others went before him, it was he who endowed it with the freshness and vitality which made its extraordinary vogue possible. Master Adrian, says Ambros, 'found in the smaller *frottole* of a Marco Caro and others many noble, serious expressions of sentiment. This *colorit*, this peculiar tone, he retained, together with the manner of treating Italian verse; but in place of the timid, poor and often clumsy technique

of the Italians he applied to them the entire Netherland mastery of accomplished counterpoint—and the madrigal was ready. . . . The madrigal was to express only the pure and the profound. The *cor gentile* was the center of this poetry and music—the heart moved by noble love, with its joys and pains, its love, hope, longing, suffering and anger. The 'tone' of the madrigal is ever one of tender emotion, never of vehement passion. . . . It should never burst out in unbeautiful, violent expressions.' Analyzing one of his madrigals, Riemann say that 'on the whole there is so much originality, so much individual endeavor, that the lack of flowering fancy and warm blood is willingly overlooked. We feel, as one does in the case of moderns, for instance Berlioz, that we are in the presence of a distinguished personality. . . . Willaert is great by virtue of the various impulses that he gave, as teacher, as eminent artist, but not really because of his compositions. If we compare him to the passionate Verdelot, the daring Arcadelt, the solemn Festa, the supple Gero, or the genial Rore, commanding all the nuances of expression, any one of these will be found more telling, but . . . in all of the works of these, his pupils, we find the traces of his genius.' Riemann has here named the greatest of the madrigalists, some of whom we must now consider further. They were all not only learned contrapuntists, but consummate masters of style, as is shown by the restraint with which they applied their skill, and they have left us works 'which for purity of style and graceful flow of melody can scarcely be exceeded.'

Philippe Verdelot's madrigals appeared even before those of Willaert (1538), but few have been preserved with all parts complete. He probably lived in Italy during 1525-1565 (Florence and Venice). His second book of five-part madrigals appeared in 1536 and in the same year Willaert published lute arrangements

of Verdelot's madrigals. Besides nine books of madrigals (four to six parts) he left motets for up to eight parts and a large mass, *Philomena.*

But the success of his madrigals was even surpassed by those of Jacques Arcadelt. A native of the Netherlands (b. 1514), the latter died in Paris after 1557. He appears as singer at the court of Florence from 1540 to 1549, when he became one of the papal singers of the Sistine Chapel in Rome and singing master to the boys at St. Peter's. Besides compositions which appeared in miscellaneous collections, he published independently five books of four-part madrigals (1537-1544), another for three parts, all of which went rapidly through many editions, besides three masses and a book of motets. One of his madrigals, *Il bianco et dolce cigno,* a notable example of the style, is reprinted by Burney.* The well-known *Ave Maria,* which has been edited by Sir Henry Bishop and transcribed by Liszt, is now thought to be of doubtful authorship.

Constanzo Festa, of Rome (where he was papal chapel singer from 1517 till his death in 1545), the first Italian representative of the imitative vocal style in church composition, is with Willaert and Verdelot the originator of the new madrigal; his *Amor che mi consigli,* published in 1531, even points to him as the first in the field. His works are distinguished by rhythm, grace, elegance, simplicity and purity of harmony. Burney further assures us that 'the subjects of imitation in it are as modern, and that the parts sing as well as if they were a production of the eighteenth century.' His madrigal *Quando ritrovo la mia pastorella* ('Down in a Flow'ry Vale') was for a long time the most popular piece of its kind in England. He was less happy in his motets, in which he followed the absurd custom of setting the voice to different texts. A celebrated *Te Deum* by him is still sung by

* 'History of Music,' III, 303.

the pontifical choir upon the election of a new pope. Festa attained the dignity of *maestro* at the Vatican, being at that time the only Italian to hold such a position.

The most distinguished pupil of Willaert was Cipriano di Rore (b. *ca.* 1516 at Mechlin or Antwerp). After leaving Willaert's tutelage in Venice he went to the court of Hercules II at Ferrara in 1542, where, in the same year, his first book of madrigals was brought out. After sundry travels in his native country, he was made *maestro di capella* to Duke Ottavio Farnese at Parma, returning to Venice as Willaert's successor upon the latter's death. He enjoyed great distinction as a composer of originality—of his ecclesiastical works we shall speak in Chapter X. As a composer of madrigals and *ricercari* (see Chap. XI, p. 356) he followed in his master's footsteps. Eight books of four to five-part madrigals, published from 1542 to 1565, of which the four-part ones were issued in score form in 1577 as an aid to the study of counterpoint, constitute the bulk of his secular works. It will be well to mention here that Monteverdi, a half century later, acclaimed 'the divine Cipriano di Rore' as the founder of the new art, because of his endeavors in establishing the supremacy of melody.*

Luca Marenzio (b. near Brescia, 1550-1560) was probably the most distinguished of all the madrigalists, though he by no means limited himself to this field. His contemporaries called him *il piu dolce cigna* (the sweetest swan), *divino compositore*, etc., and he enjoyed the highest musical eminence. About 1584 he was *maestro* to Cardinal d'Este, later at the court of Sigismund III of Poland received the unusual salary

* The inscription *Cromatici, a note nere* on the title page of some of di Rore's madrigals, which has been thought to indicate the chromatic nature of these compositions, refers, as Riemann clearly shows (*Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* II².411), simply to the color of the notes, *croma* being a current name for the eighth note since early times.

of 1,000 *scudi,* and was organist of the papal chapel in Rome from 1585 till his death in 1594, caused, it was said, by a broken heart because of his love for a relative of Cardinal Aldobrandini whom he could not marry. His printed compositions comprise no less than eighteen books of madrigals (4 to 6 voices) and many ecclesiastical works.

Of further names we need only mention Constanzo Porta, of Padua (1530-1601); Giovanni Croce, of Venice (1557-1609); Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli (of whom we shall speak in a later chapter); Claudio Merulo, of Correggio (1553-1604), and Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa (1560-1614), 'the most daring and most genial harmonist of the sixteenth century,' and finally the princely Lassus and the great Palestrina himself, as a few of the endless host of madrigal writers. Not thousands, but tens of thousands of madrigals were composed in this period; it was the accepted medium for the expression of every poetic idea, every pretty sentiment. People sang madrigals at home and abroad, in society and for private pastime; in short, its popularity has not been surpassed even by the modern song.

IV

A distinct departure from the madrigal of Willaert, and one in which historians are wont to see a direct step toward the opera, is seen in the descriptive, or dramatic, madrigals of Allessandro Striggio (b. Mantua, 1535) and Orazio Vecchi. The descriptive element had indeed invaded song composition much earlier. The French 'program *chansons,*' notably those of Clement Jannequin, who attempted to reproduce in vocal music the song of birds and the noise of battle, were, perhaps, the most remarkable phenomena of this kind. Though not an Italian, Jannequin deserves

notice here because of his influence in this direction. He was a pupil of Josquin and, besides a varied lot of sacred works, issued a great number of *chansons* which became popular as bravura pieces in instrumental form, being printed in Italy without texts in 1577 (*partite in caselle per sonar*). His great chansons (*inventions*), which stamp him *the* programmistic composer of the sixteenth century, include *La bataille* (on the battle of Marignano [1515]), *La guerre, Le caquet des femmes* (women's gossip), *La jalousie, La chasse au lièvre* (rabbit hunt), etc., etc. A curious example is the excerpt reprinted in our supplement. In it the cuckoo's call, the nightingale's song, the notes of the thrush and other sounds of nature's music are introduced simultaneously.*

Verdelot's realistic description of the chase, Eckhard's tumult of the people at St. Mark's and Striggio's dispute of the washerwomen at the brook are additional instances in which vocal music appropriated the dramatic elements of action, movement—the passing shapes and the play of colors. In the hands of these composers, the madrigal became a vehicle for humorous or whimsical moods no less than for the expression of tender sentiments, or 'a charming, picturesque and dramatic symphony,' for which Romain Rolland finds an analogy in the 'Romeo and Juliet' symphony of Berlioz. Such are Orazio Vecchi's *La selva di varia ricreatone* (1590), 'Musical Banquet' (1597) and *Amfiparnasso*. They are in reality series of madrigals which follow out a continuous idea as in dramatic action, their text comprising the dramatic forms of monologue and dialogue, but, curious as it may seem, never set to music in the way that seems natural to us—as solos, duets, etc.—but always in madrigalesque polyphony. Thus, instead of having the

* *Musikgeschichte in Beispielen.* Excerpt, etc., in *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte,* II². 407 ff.

singers represent the different characters of the piece, the actual practice was to have the monologue sections sung by all of them, while the dialogue would be carried on between sets of two or three singers each. For example, if Isabella (in *Amfiparnasso*) speaks to her lover Lucio, a group of three voices represents each of them; Isabella is characterized by a soprano and supported by an alto and a 'quinto,' Lucio represented by a tenor sustained by a quinto and a bass. Never did it occur to the composer, even when the text was marked *Lucio solo,* actually to write for a solo voice! By this we may understand what a revolution was necessary in men's minds to accomplish the essential step to dramatic fidelity.

The following is Romain Rolland's pen picture of the most interesting exponent of the dramatic madrigal: 'Orazio Vecchi (b. Modena 1550; d. there 1605) was a man of the Renaissance. He possessed its superabundance of vigor, the desire for action, and a robust good humor. Chapel master at Modena, we find him on the highways and by-ways of Italy, indoors only to take part in brawls and *coltellate.* Commissioned as archdeacon of Correggio to correct the Gradual of the Roman Catholic church; he is occupied in 1591 with directing private and public masquerades in Modena. A writer of celebrated masses, he becomes at the same time the creator of *opera buffa.* Three times the Bishop of Reggio dismissed him from his function, but his reputation was enormous—the house of Este and the great Italian lords extended their favor to him, while his name spread to Austria, to Denmark and to Poland. At his death in 1605 he was regarded not only as one of the foremost musicians of the century and the inventor of musical comedy, but as one of the greatest geniuses of the age.' Comedy is, indeed, his sphere; rarely does he ascend to the height of pathos or passion, though he amply proves himself capable of

portraying earnest sentiment and sometimes pathos; but the question whether he merits the reputation of having created comic opera or not we shall leave to the judgment of the reader.

First we shall let him speak for himself. 'I know well,' he says, 'that peradventure some will consider my "caprices" as unworthy and light, but they should learn that as much grace, art and fidelity is required to trace a comic part as in representing an old reasoning sage.' And elsewhere, 'Music is poetry by the same right as poetry itself.' That the conscious purpose of his music was the expression of ideas is evident from these directions which preface his *Amfiparnasso:* 'Everything here has a precise purpose; it is necessary to find this, and only by expressing it well and intelligently will you give life to the performance. . . . The moral import [of the piece] is of less consequence than the simple comedy; since music appeals to the emotions rather than the intellect, I have been obliged to compress the development of the action into the smallest space, for speech is more rapid than song. Hence it is necessary to condense, contract, suppress detail and only to take the capital situations, the moments characteristic to the subject. The imagination must supply the rest.'

Vecchi's disciple, Banchieri, gives a clear account of the manner of performing these madrigals in the preface to *La comedia di prudenza giovenile:* 'Before the music one of the singers will read in a loud voice the name of the scene, the names of the characters and the argument. The place of performance is a room of medium size, as closed-in as possible (for the sake of acoustics); in one corner of the room two large carpets are laid on the floor and an agreeable decoration is used for the background. Two seats are placed at the right and left respectively. Behind the "back-drop" are benches for the singers, who must

turn toward the audience and be seated at a hand's breadth from each other. Behind them is an orchestra of lutes, *clavicembali*, etc., attuned to the voices. Above is a large sheet which hides both singers and musicians. The singers (invisible) follow the music of their parts; there should be three (or better six) at a time. They must give animation to the cheerful words, pathos to the sad ones, and enunciate loudly and intelligibly. The reciting actors (alone on the scene) must prepare their rôles, know them well by heart and follow the music closely. It would not be amiss to have a prompter aid the singers, instrumentalists and reciters.'

These 'actors' do not, as may be supposed, perform pantomime; they simply pronounce the prologue and announce the scenes. At the end they would, perhaps, dance a few ballet steps in order to leave the spectator in a happy frame of mind. By way of example we shall briefly recount the plot of Vecchi's *chef-d'œuvre*, that *comedia armonica* of the strangely inexplicable title *Amfiparnasso*. The story centers around the love intrigue of Lucio and Isabella, the daughter of Pantalone, who has determined to marry her to the pedantic Gratiano. Lucio attempts to commit suicide but is saved. Isabella, about to follow him into death, declares her love. They are married and in the last scene receive the forced consent and the presents of all concerned. Meantime, Pantalone serenades and is rejected by the courtesan Hortensia, Lelio pursues another adventure with the beautiful Nisa, and the captain, Cardone, believing himself loved by Isabella, makes advances and is promptly rebuked. Doctor Gratiano sings absurd serenades while Francatrippa, the valet of Pantalone, goes to borrow money at the Jews' house, who reject him under pretext of the Sabbath. The book for this amazing comedy, as indeed for all the others, was written by Vecchi himself. He

makes all his characters speak in their various dialects and the 'score' is full of humorous descriptions and characterizations. The piece had great success and, while there were many adverse criticisms, the number of his imitators attests the continued popularity of the form which he developed.

Adriano Banchieri of Bologna (1567-1634) was Vecchi's chief disciple and one of his great admirers. He frankly imitated him in his *Studio dilettevole* for three voices (1603), while in his *Saviezza giovenile* he yields to the influence of the Florentine reform (of which later) and endeavors to present a compromise between the 'representative' and the polyphonic styles. He was, moreover, a musician of great merit, composed, like Vecchi, numerous organ pieces and was the author of a number of theoretic works and polemics. The vogue of the dramatic madrigal continued throughout the north of Italy for twenty years after Vecchi's death; in Bologna it survived to the end of the seventeenth century. Whatever its importance in the development of the opera, however far removed from realistic action, the dramatic principle is there—we have, in fact, a musical drama, or, at least, a dramatic symphony, especially if we regard the voices which accompany the characters in the nature of instruments.

And here it behooves us to record another peculiar fact: These minor voice parts were often actually played on instruments, not only in the dramatic madrigal, but in the other vocal forms as well; sometimes because of the lack of singers and sometimes for the sake of variety. The first recorded instance of this kind of solo singing was supposed to have occurred in 1539 when Sileno sang in an *intermedio* the upper part of a madrigal by Francesco Corteccia (d. 1571), accompanying himself on the violone, while the other parts, representing satyrs, were taken by wind instruments. Caccini, the reputed inventor of

'monody,' in an intermezzo by Pietro Strozzi performed at the marriage of Duke Francesco and Bianca Capello (1579), himself sang the rôle of Night with an accompaniment of viols. These instances are, however, not isolated. The experiment proved popular and became common practice. A number of the *frottole, villanelle,* madrigals, etc., which came from Petrucci's press, appeared, indeed, in the guise of lute arrangements.*

But all this was as far from true 'monody,' or solo melody, as the dramatic madrigal was removed from opera, for the mere emphasizing of an upper part, which was developed out of, or as counterpart to, another, could not make it express the sentiment intended by the text or follow the accents and natural inflections of the spoken word. Monody was as much a lost art as the Greek tragedy, which the 'inventors' of opera thought they were reviving from a slumber of well-nigh two thousand years. Its reinstatement was the result of a deliberate reform, a revolt against the prevailing polyphonic method, accomplished by a limited number of individuals. Even if the analytical historian must reject the possibility of the sudden invention of an artistic form, we cannot deny the merit of the most definite step toward the creation of opera to the Florentine *camerata,* an account of whose activities we shall reserve for a later chapter. Our object in

* That these vocal compositions were often performed entirely by instruments is indicated by the direction which we meet frequently on sixteenth century title pages: 'practical for all instruments.' The kind of instruments was not indicated and the choice was left to the direction of the performer. Not till the end of the century did musicians begin to discriminate and to recognize the value of instrumental timbre. In the *intermezzi* arrangements of madrigals, etc., were often performed by many instruments, as for instance in those produced in 1565 by Striggio and Fr. Corteccia (d. 1571), who assembled an orchestra of 2 clavicembali, 4 violini, 1 liuto mezzano, 1 cornetto muto, 4 tromboni, 1 flauti diritti, 4 traverse, 1 liuto grosso, 1 sotto basso di viola, 1 soprano di viola, 4 liuti, 1 viola d'arco, 1 lirone, 1 traverso contralto, 1 flauto grande tenore, 1 trombone basso, 5 storte, 1 stortina, 2 cornetti ordinarii, 1 cornetto grosso, 1 dolzaina, 1 lira, 1 ribecchino, 2 tamburi.

this discussion has been to emphasize the fact that monody, the most natural form of musical expression, was *not* an arbitrary invention such as the contrapuntal style evidently was; that it lay, indeed, at the very foundation of that style, but was so effectually displaced by it that only the faintest memories of it survived. It was from these memories that the new art of the seventeenth century, with its new dramatic significance, sprang—just as the *Ars nova*, the new art of the fifteenth century, had sprung from their source. The intervening space of two centuries was a period of prodigious development both in secular and church music, and of the most active exchange between the two. But in this exchange the church unquestionably remained the debtor, for it acquired from the secular art most of its really vital elements, even dramatic force. Only thus could it become the ideal expression of that new religious spirit with which both the Catholic and Protestant faiths were to be imbued. The development of this religious art, which forms the parallel to the movements just described, is our next subject.

C. S.

CHAPTER X

THE GOLDEN AGE OF POLYPHONY

Invention of music printing—The Reformation—The immediate successors of Josquin; Adrian Willaert and the Venetian school; Germany and England—Orlando di Lasso—Palestrina; his life—The Palestrina style; the culmination of vocal polyphony—Conclusion.

I

THE deep vital forces which had for two hundred years been urging Italy to magnificent achievement broke through into music during the course of the sixteenth century. Music was, as she has always been, the last to respond to a general movement; but the response, when it came, entailed an entire reconstruction of the art. All through the century the process of reconstruction was active. It was, however, gradual in its working. Only toward the very end of the century a few bold explorers and experimenters turned their backs upon the past, cut loose from the old art of music and started in to build with new stone and new tools a new art. We have to do in this chapter with the old art; on the one hand, with influences which boldly altered it, and with new developments which were set free through these alterations; on the other, with its ultimate perfection and consequent end.

The invention of music-printing just before the beginning of the century had a powerful influence upon the development of music. The beautiful manuscripts in which early music has been preserved to us were the work for the most part of monks, and are another evidence of the restriction of music to the church.

With the invention of printing came a liberation from this restraint. Music circulated through the lay society—all kinds of music, both secular and sacred—it stepped from the dim vast cathedrals and went among the people and entered into their homes and into their lives. The world of men and women welcomed it and changed it, formed it to the expression of their joys and sorrows. The superhuman intricacies of counterpoint and canon little by little withered and fell by the way.

Ulrich Han, of Ingolstadt, in 1476 solved the problem of printing music by means of movable types, but his invention seems to have languished until other enterprising men took it up. In Italy this was done by Ottaviano dei Petrucci, born in 1466 at Fossombrone, near Ancona. Petrucci, one of the first monopolists in the business of printing music, was, like Aldus Manutius, a man of good birth and fortune. Some time before 1498 he had established himself at Venice, and obtained from the municipal council the sole privilege, for twenty years, of printing figured music (*canto figurato*), and music in the tablature of the organ and lute. This meant that, so far as Venice was concerned, all the published lamentations, frottole, motets, and masses were to issue from Petrucci's press.

His first publication in 1501 was a collection of ninety-six pieces, most of them written for three or four voices, by Okeghem, Hobrecht, Josquin, Isaak, and others. The printing was done by a double process: first the staff, then the notes, in a small quarto, with fine black ink. The parts stood opposite one another on the open page, thus:

soprano	tenor
alto	bass

The registry or 'fit' of the notes was perfect, and the effect of the whole was admirable.

This expensive double process, however, was superseded about five years later by another, simpler one, involving only one impression. In 1511 Petrucci left his plant at Venice in the hands of others and returned to Fossombrone. Two years later he obtained a patent from Pope Leo X for all the printing in the papal states for a period of fifteen years. Petrucci's last publication, a collection of eighty-three motets, is dated 1523. His works are rare and highly valued as antique specimens of printing, and the man himself is also remembered for the standards of neatness and precision which he established.

Pierre Attaignant is said to be the first to introduce music printing by means of movable types into France. In the nine years from 1527 to 1533 Attaignant printed nineteen books of motets of various French and foreign masters. These prints are also very rare and historically important. His work was still going on in 1543, but it seems that the famous Ballards were soon to take it up. The names not only of printers, but of the engravers and founders of these first music types are justly preserved. Pierre Hautin was engraver for Attaignant, and Etienne Briard a founder at Avignon. Briard furnished the first known specimens of round notes, in place of the usual quadrangular shapes, and these were used for the first time in printing the works of Carpentras in 1532. This, however, was an exception, as the round notes were not generally introduced into print until about the year 1700. Le Bé was another well-known type founder. His types were of the sort which printed notes and lines simultaneously. Each individual type contained a note and a portion of the staff; but later Le Bé adopted Petrucci's method of double impressions.

Adrian Leroy, a lute player, singer, and composer, appears as the next printer of renown in Paris after Attaignant. Leroy presently joined forces with an-

other follower of the craft named Ballard—incidentally marrying the daughter of the house—and in 1552 the firm obtained a patent as sole printers of music for King Henry II of France. This patent, frequently renewed, remained in the Ballard family until it was abolished by the French Revolution, more than two hundred years later; and the types of Le Bé, printing both notes and lines at once, purchased by Pierre Ballard in 1540 for fifty thousand livres, were still in use in 1750. One cannot help suspecting that these types, excellent as they must have been, grew old-fashioned long before they were laid aside. But monopoly has its uses. There was no one to compete on equal terms with the distinguished and influential Ballards; so there was no use to them in making expensive changes in type.

For more than two centuries, then, the Ballard family held an important place as printers of music in France. The famous Orlando di Lasso visited them; Lully's operas were printed by them, first from movable types, later from copper plates. In the early days of the firm Leroy himself wrote an instruction book for the lute, which was translated into English in two different versions—one by a writer named F. K. Gentleman. Leroy also wrote an instruction book for the 'guiterne' (guitar) and a book of *airs de cour* for the lute, in the dedication of which he said that such airs were formerly known as *voix de ville*. In England Thomas Tallis and his pupil, William Byrd, obtained in 1575 a monopoly for twenty years of all music printing done in the realm.

II

The invention of printing meant, as we have said, that music was no longer centralized about the church.

Yet it has to be granted that one of the greatest impulses music has ever received came to it in the early sixteenth century from a new religion; an impulse which, destined to be checked for a while, though not killed, by the horrors of religious warfare in the next century, was to gain thereafter ever more and more strength and lead at last to truly magnificent heights in the work of Johann Sebastian Bach. The new religious movement to which we refer was the Protestant Reformation under the leadership of Martin Luther.

We have said consciously that music received thereby a new impulse. To hold that music was entirely reconstructed by Luther, that he discarded all the forms and technique of music that had been up to that time developed in the art, is quite as mistaken as to hold that he wholly discarded the Roman ritual and built up a new and independent service. The change which the Reformation brought to music was like the change it brought to the service, far more one of spirit than one of form. Luther's reform was essentially to abolish the mediation of the priesthood, to clear from the service in so far as possible all that might stand between the worshipper and his God, to give freedom to the intimate personal communion between God and man which the northerner naturally feels and practises. In this respect Luther's reform would theoretically restore all music in the service to the congregation. But Luther was dearly fond of music, of, so to speak, the best music. His favorite composers were Josquin des Près and Ludwig Senfl, both contrapuntists of enormous skill. Their music was a worthy adornment of the service. 'I am not of the opinion,' he said, 'that on account of the Gospel all the arts should be crushed out of existence as some over-religious people pretend; but I would willingly see all the arts, especially music, in the service of him who has created and given them.' Congregational singing is anything but an art; often,

indeed, is hardly music. Luther had no intention to dismiss trained choirs from the churches and give over all the music of the service to the untrained mass of worshippers. The trained choir therefore was retained in all the Lutheran churches, which could afford to pay for one, and music for these choirs—that is, artistic music, often music written by Catholic composers in complicated contrapuntal style—held an honored place in the Lutheran ritual.

The personal intimate spirit from which the reform drew life, however, found an expression in music. To the congregation was allotted a greater or less portion of song. It will be remembered that the early Christians sang together and that not until the seventh century was the privilege taken from them and restricted only to a trained choir. The German people, as a matter of fact, seem never to have quite given up their share in the musical part of the service. At some of the great festival services they joined in the *Kyrie* and in the *Alleluia,* and very early it became the custom to insert German verses in the liturgy at these places. Thus there developed a literature of German hymns, sometimes partly German and partly Latin, as the following old Easter hymn, obviously interpolated in the *Kyrie:*

'Christ ist erstanden
Von der Marter alle.
Des sollen wir alle froh sein,
Christ soll unser Trost sein,
Kyrioleis.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!
Des sollen wir alle froh sein,
Christ soll unser Trost sein,
Kyrioleis.'

In connection with the mystery plays other hymns were written, such as the following cradle-song, part German, part Latin and part nonsense:

'In dulci jubilo
Nun singet und sei froh.
Unser's Herzens Wonne
Liegt in præsipio,
Und leuchtet als die Sonne.
Matris in gremio.
Alpha et O. Alpha et O.'

About these hymns there was woven a sort of religious folk music. By the time of the Reformation there was a whole literature to draw from and Luther needed only to organize and standardize many of the hymns which had been familiar to the people for generations. To these he added others of his own writing. The music was drawn from all sources, practically none was especially composed. Luther had to aid him in compiling his hymn-book two famous musicians, Konrad Rupff and Johann Walther. In 1524 these two men were his guests for a period of three weeks. Köstlin * writes: 'While Walther and Rupff sat at the table bending over the music sheets with pen in hand, Father Luther walked up and down the room, trying on his fife to ally the melodies that flowed from his memory and his imagination with the poems he had discovered, until he had made the verse melody a rhythmically finished, well-rounded, strong, and compact whole.' Here we have a picture of the German hymn-tune, later called the *chorale,* in the process of crystallization.

'The Devil does not need all the good tunes for himself,' Luther wisely remarked, and he drew from all sources, secular and sacred, for his melodies. The same breadth of choice was likewise exercised by his followers throughout the century: a song sung by the footsoldiers at the battle of Pavia became the *Durch Adam's Fall ist ganz verderbt;* the chorale melody *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen,* can be traced to an old love song, *Einmal tät ich Spazieren;* a love song,

* *Luther als Vater des evangelischen Kirchenliedes.*

Mein G'müt ist mir verwirret von einer Jungfrau zart, by Hans Leo Hassler, became the choral melody to the funeral-hymn *Herzlich thut mich verlangen,* and later the same melody was set to Paul Gerhardt's hymn, *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden,* and in that form holds a leading part in Bach's St. Matthew Passion. Nor were the chorale tunes taken from Germany alone. Favorite part-songs of Italy and France were appropriated and set to German words.

The hymn-book compiled by Luther with the help of Rupff and Walther was published in Wittenburg in 1524. It was intended for church use, and that the compilers had the choir, not the congregation, in mind is proved by the fact that all the tunes are contrapuntally set, with the melody as *cantus firmus* in the tenor, that is to say, in the middle of the music, not soaring triumphantly aloft majestically to guide the congregation. We have, therefore, in these chorales of Luther not a new form but a new spirit. How great a part the congregation ever actually took in them is open to discussion. Doubtless in those churches where there was no skilled choir, congregational singing played an important rôle; but it seems likely that in those churches where there was such a choir, congregational singing was kept as much in the background as possible. In 1586 Lukas Osiander published a set of fifty chorales, 'set contrapuntally in such a way that the whole Christian congregation can always join in them.' This was obviously a kind attempt to bring the more or less neglected congregation into the musical part of the service. In Osiander's arrangements the melody is in the soprano. But the setting is still too intricate for general use and the same rather condescending, yet still lofty, attitude toward the congregation is characteristic of all composers down to the time of Bach.

The question of just how the congregation sang

those chorales allotted to them is also in doubt. It is hardly possible that in the first half of the sixteenth century the organ accompanied them. The organ was still far too imperfect to attempt polyphonic playing such as would afford a harmonic support to the singers, who, we may presume, sang only in unison. It is more likely that the organ and the congregation alternated, or that the choir and the congregation sang in turn. Toward the end of the century attempts were made to have the choir lead the congregation, and then later, in the course of time, the organ was perfected and was used for accompaniment, coming soon to drown out the choir, which had little chance to maintain a leadership over the mass of singers on the one hand and the organ on the other. Thus the organ finally took the leadership. In its new position it no longer alternated with the congregation, and the skill which organists had had an opportunity to show in the solo passages, alternating, in the old days, with the congregation, was now concentrated upon the prelude. In this way the foundation for a characteristically German art-form in organ music, the *chorale-prelude,* was laid.

Though Luther was too much of a musician to be willing to give over the music of the service to be mishandled by a crowd of untrained singers, he none the less intended his chorale melodies to enter into the lives of the German Protestants. Thus, while, on the one hand, we have Luther's own book and subsequent books in the same contrapuntal style, on the other, we have hymn-books in which only the melody was written and which carried the noble old tunes to every hearth and home throughout Protestant Germany. The first 'house' hymn-book appeared a short while before Luther's church book. It was compiled by Luther's friend, Justus Jonas, and was called the *Erfurt Enchiridion.* Among the hymns contained in it were two old

Latin hymns, already mentioned in Chapter V, the *Veni redemptor gentium,* by St. Ambrose, and the *Media in vita,* by Notker Balbulus, both, of course, done into German. An interesting collection was published in Frankfurt in 1571 with the preface: 'Street songs, cavalier songs, and mountain songs transformed into Christian and moral songs, for the abolishing, in the course of time, of the bad and vexatious practice of singing idle and shameful songs in the streets, in fields, and at home, by substituting for them good sacred and honest words.' The chorale melodies, indeed, became the property of the Germans. They were colored with the sentiment of a whole race; they took on a nobility and a dignity, they seemed to germinate new life, and, finally, they became the glory of a lofty art, based on the skill of the Netherlanders, modified and adorned according to a new style soon to be perfected by the Italians, and infused with rich, warm life flowing from the very hearts of the German people.

The Protestant Reformation did not, then, at once alter the form of church music in Germany. Other influences, sprung from Catholic Italy, were to be far more powerful in that respect. Even the tendency toward harmonic writing, toward emphasizing the progression of chords rather than the interweaving of melodies, which the chorale melodies undoubtedly furthered, was a tendency very evident in Italian church music of the time, notably at Venice, was indeed a mark of the time. The true significance of the Lutheran reform in the history of music is that it laid music open to a flood of genuine strong feeling, personal, intimate, intensely human feeling, which little by little during the next two centuries, in spite of the horror and agony of persecution and warfare, permeated every vein and artery of music, and filled them with vital warmth and glowing color. During the Thirty Years' War only the hymn and the chorale

melody escaped destruction in Germany, and these survived because they were actually a part of the people and could cease to exist only when the race had been stamped out.

In France and in England the Protestant movement had far less influence upon music than in Germany. In France this seems to be explained by the fact that the French had not, like the Germans, a literature of native hymns, but had to construct their hymnbook from the Psalter, and that they had a more slender stock of genuine folk-song to draw upon. Zwingli, the leader of the Swiss Reformation, which was to win the support of the Frenchman Calvin, was not in favor of music, and his followers were ruthless in their destruction of organs and collections of music. Calvin, on the other hand, had in regard to music more the point of view of Luther. He drew freely from the Lutheran hymn-books both melodies and words, but especially in favor of metrical versions of the Psalms. These were set to music often excellent and finely harmonized. Among the Calvinistic psalm writers Clement Marot is most famous. It was he who, as court poet to Francis I, made several versions of the Psalms into the style of ballads, which won great popularity by their novelty and were set to gay tunes and sung by the people at court. Subsequently, in forced exile at Geneva, he added nineteen more to the collection of thirty he had already written, and these were later supplemented and arranged in final form by Theodore de Beza. Most conspicuous among the musicians connected with the movement in France were Loys Bourgeois and Claude Goudimel. The latter may have been a Netherlander and a pupil of Josquin. He was killed in the massacre of St. Bartholomew in Lyons (1572). Bourgeois composed many melodies himself to the Calvinistic hymns and set them more or less simply in four parts. Goudimel, on the other hand,

composed elaborate settings in the style of motets with the melody, seldom his own, in the tenor.

The English, like the French, relied upon metrical versions of the Psalms for their hymn-books. Furthermore, the beginning of the Reformation in England was complicated with political motives and the movement was, for a long time, simply a break from the Church of Rome rather than an outburst of religious convictions. Yet after the suppression of monasteries between 1536 and 1540 there was something of the same destruction of organs and music which had wrought such havoc in Switzerland, and a general condemnation of elaborate church service. The first attempt at hymn tunes was the *Goostlie Psalmes* of Coverdale, drawn largely from Lutheran sources. Under Edward VI (1547-1553) began the organization of the Anglican Church and the drafting of liturgies in English. The movement was checked by the reign of Mary, but under Elizabeth resulted in a standard ritual which called forth the best musical genius of the country. An elaborate setting of the canticles, etc., used in morning and evening prayer was encouraged and a new art-form, the musical flower of the English Reformation, the anthem, resulted from the setting of the variable portions of these services.

III

The great spirit of the Italian Renaissance, which was essentially a spirit of freedom and joy in individuality, thus took shape in Germany, England, and France, and laid a hand upon music as it had already done in Italy. On every hand it scatters its seeds, which will take root and later flower. Elements of form and design, rich chromatic alterations of harmony, splendid dramatic effects of answering double choirs are woven into the intricate web of Netherland polyphonic

music, touching it with color and fire, making it fertile with new and vast developments. But all is gradual; the art grows slowly and only slowly changes. Amid the turbulent restlessness, the experiment and daring, the old ideal, the ideal of the monasteries and the great cathedrals, still awaits perfection—the touch of Lassus and of Palestrina.

We have seen that Petrucci's first publication of 1501 contained ninety-six pieces, most of which were by Okeghem, Hobrecht, Josquin, Isaak, and others, such as Ghiselin, La Rue, Alex. Agricola, Brumel, Craen, by far the most part Netherlanders. This was in Venice. We need no further evidence of the popularity of the Netherland art in Italy. The Netherland style had become by this time the standard style of Europe; and during the first quarter of the sixteenth century Netherlanders still held sway over the development of music. There were pupils of Josquin in the Netherlands, in France, in Spain, in Italy, and in Germany. His music flowed over the face of Europe and his art penetrated to all the courts and into all the cathedrals. And upon all his pupils the spirit of the Renaissance was at work. Thousands of madrigals, of love songs, drinking songs, and hunting songs came crowding from their pens and jostled masses and motets in confusion. Program music was in the air, songs of battle, songs of gossiping women, of birds, of shepherds and of shepherdesses. It is hardly surprising that music for the church began to take on colors more and more brilliant. It is more surprising that the old ideal of exalted polyphony still endured and still called men to its standard.

Some of the pupils of Josquin are worthy of separate mention. Perhaps the most distinguished of them was Nicolas Gombert. He was a Netherlander by birth. We find him in the service of the sovereign of the Netherlands, later in the royal chapel at Brussels. In

1530 he was master of the boys at the imperial chapel in Madrid, and afterward probably first master in the same chapel. In 1556 he was back in his own country again, where, a few years after, he died. A large number of his works, from special editions of the sixteenth century, have come down to us, and some of his manuscripts, like so many other treasures of this period, are in the Munich library. His work for the church is characterized by a gentle, harmonious beauty, and Fétis called him the predecessor of Palestrina, especially on account of a beautiful *Pater noster,* which is marked by a lofty religious sentiment. He was very successful as a composer of motets, and, in his secular works, showed a tendency toward tone-color effects—program music—especially in his chansons, *Le berger et la bergère,* and *Le chant des oiseaux.*

Benedictus Ducis, another Netherlander and pupil of Josquin, born at Bruges in 1480, was distinguished by the musical brotherhood of Antwerp by being elected Prince of the Guild—the highest honor an artist could achieve at that time in the Netherlands. Leaving Antwerp in 1515 he appears to have visited Henry the Eighth of England, and later to have been in Germany. There is some difficulty in distinguishing the works of Ducis from those of Benedictus Appenzelder, owing to the peculiar custom of the time of signing manuscripts only with the Christian name. It is generally conceded, however, that Ducis composed a funeral ode on the death of his master Josquin, also a motet for eight parts, *Peccantem me quotidie,* passion music and settings of the Psalms, the earnestness and nobility of which justify his fame.

Jean Mouton, another pupil, was born probably near Metz, in Lorraine, became chapel singer to Louis XII and Francis I of France, then canon of Thérouanne and afterward of St. Quentin. His works show him to be a master of counterpoint and a worthy pupil

of Josquin. Petrucci printed five of his masses in 1508, and later more than twenty of his motets; and Attaignant included his compositions in the third book of a famous collection of masses published in 1532, and also in a collection of motets which appeared somewhat earlier. A few masses in manuscript are in the Munich library. A large number of his motets have been preserved, justly valued for their artistic and effective qualities, which in some instances closely resemble those of his master. His pupil, Adrian Willaert, was one of the most gifted and one of the most influential composers of the next generation. He may be regarded as the founder of the Venetian school of composers, who played such a brilliant part in the history of music during the sixteenth century, who were experimenters and innovators, whose energy opened many a new channel to the course of music. The influence of Josquin thus passed to Venice.

Adrian Willaert, born probably in 1490 at Roulers, in Belgium, first studied law in Paris. Afterward he adopted music as his profession and became a pupil of Jean Mouton. In 1516 we find him travelling in Italy, visiting Rome, Venice, and Ferrara. There is a story to the effect that in Rome he heard a motet of his, the *Verbum dulce et suave,* sung by the papal choir, whose members believed it to have been written by Josquin; and that they refused to sing it again when they discovered it to be by an unknown composer. If this story be true, it may be added here that Willaert lived to see the day when his compositions were considered entirely worthy of attention, even from the most distinguished body of singers in Christendom.

That time was not yet come, however. Willaert left Italy, taking service as chapel master to King Ludwig II, ruler of Hungary and Bavaria; but in 1526 he was back again in Venice, where, in the following year, he received the appointment as first chapel master of

the Basilica of St. Mark, at a salary of seventy ducats, about one hundred and sixty dollars. This was later increased to two hundred ducats, about four hundred and sixty dollars, which was considered a princely income. For thirty-five years the master kept at his post, although twice during that time, once in 1542 and again in 1556, a longing for his native country drew him back to Belgium. It was his hope, indeed, to spend his last years in Bruges; but he had taken root too firmly in Italy. Friends, admirers, and patrons urged him to remain in Venice, and it was there, in 1562, that he died.

The Basilica of St. Mark was already ancient when Willaert came to Venice. Founded in 830 to receive the relics of the second Evangelist brought from Alexandria, rebuilt a hundred and fifty years later, it had received its permanent form about the middle of the eleventh century. Five hundred years had but increased its beauty and added mellowness and historic interest to its charm. Externally, its domes and pinnacles, its encrusted marbles and pillars, its bronze horses and many-colored arches constitute a unique and splendid monument of history. Within its walls, statues, columns crowned with capitals from Greece and Byzantium, and rich mosaics blend in a beauty at once impressive and magnificent. The interior is not large, two hundred and five by one hundred and sixty-four feet; but it is particularly well adapted to the use of the two organs, which are placed opposite each other.

This circumstance suggested to Willaert the device of dividing his choir so as to contrast the mass effect of the united voices with antiphonal singing. With this device, happily carried into effect, there developed in time, under Willaert's hands, a new style of composition for two choirs. It was this style which continued in vogue for more than a century and formed the

standard and became the peculiar characteristic of the Venetian school.

In his early experiments with the divided choir Willaert made use of the Psalms, whose poetical form, with the parallel half-verses and refrains, seemed especially adapted to antiphonal rendering. Following these, he composed hymns and masses, not after the manner of the eight or ten-part compositions known in the Netherlands, but works specially adapted to the double choir, each part complete in itself, each combining with or opposing the other, and yet creating an impression of unity and centralization. This was actually a new artistic creation, and by reason of it Willaert became almost the idol of the Venetians. They called his lovely music 'liquid gold,' adapted his name to 'Messer Adriano,' honored him with verses and public addresses, and, in his old age, besought him to leave his ashes to the city in which his artistic triumphs had been achieved.

Willaert's experiments with double choir effects had a profound and lasting influence upon the development of music. In the first place, owing to this, devices of imitation and canonic progression which had so long been the most prominent feature of ecclesiastical and secular music, became secondary in importance to chord progressions. The reason is obvious. To get the best effect with two answering choirs the sections which each sings must not be long and complicated, but relatively short and clear cut, otherwise the effect of balance or of echo is lost; and in these relatively short sections there is hardly time to accomplish elaborate polyphonic development. Even if there were, the polyphonic effects are far too subtle to be easily recognized in echo or answer. The tendency in writing music for two choirs was therefore toward a simple style, clearly balanced, with certain definite harmonic relationships which could not fail to be recognized

when repeated. The composers of the Venetian school were almost within reach of the harmonic idea of music, which rose clearly to supremacy only late in the next century. They were actually breaking away from the ecclesiastical modes, not only by thus trying to write in a simple harmonic style, which was founded nearly on our ideas of tonic and dominant, but also by enriching their harmonies with chromatic variations. Willaert thus stands out as one of the founders of what has been called the coloristic or chromatic school of the sixteenth century. In his music, and even more in the music of his followers, the old modes are constantly altered and with them the practice of *musica ficta,* already mentioned, reaches its height.* It meant the crumbling of the model system. It must not, however, be supposed that Willaert abandoned entirely the traditions of the Netherlanders and that he

* *Musica ficta* is music in which the ecclesiastical modes, theoretically never to be altered, are freely varied by chromatics, that is to say, in which the diatonic or natural notes of the modes are raised and lowered by sharps and flats, either to enrich the harmony or to facilitate the *leading* of the voice parts. The instinct so to alter notes that they may glide or lead, so to speak, into certain chords is almost fundamental. The same instinct was equally powerful in another direction in forming scales even among semi-civilized races, only in scales, which are *melodic* formulæ, the instinct is to glide downward to a final note, as, for instance, in the Dorian tetrachord of the Greeks, whereas in harmonic music the instinct is to glide upward. The so-called *leading tone* in our scale is the result of harmonic instinct, and its final establishment in the scale is certainly heralded in *musica ficta.* A comparison of the so-called natural and harmonic minor scales in our own system will, perhaps, make the matter clear to the reader lacking technical knowledge. The natural A-minor scale comprises on the keyboard the white notes from A to a. In the harmonic minor, that is to say, in the minor scale so altered as to be suitable for the purposes of harmony, the G is raised a half tone by a sharp and therefore *leads* irresistibly to the A above it. This sharping of the G augments the natural interval from F to G, and, since this augmented interval is hard to sing, the F, too, is sometimes sharped, and the scale then becomes what we call the melodic minor. Nothing could be more indicative than this 'melodic' compromise of the power harmony has exercised over the development of music, for rather than do without the *leading* tone, which is itself an alteration of the natural scale, we alter the scale still further. Our melodic minor scale is therefore constructed to square with the harmonic need, a queer paradox. Before harmony came to influence composers the true melodic alteration of this scale of white notes between A and a would have been the flatting or lowering of the B, so that the

gave up writing in the complicated style altogether. He, indeed, employed imitation and canon, but more casually; often only at the entrance of short alternating sections. His voice parts then proceeded in 'solid chord pillars,' as Naumann has happily said, in a style markedly in advance of the old contrapuntal conceptions. In him therefore we have a brilliant example of the old style worked upon by new impulses, by the spirit of the Renaissance, the desire for rich color and varied, beautiful form.

Willaert was an industrious composer, and his works go far toward making the period from 1450 to 1550 'the golden century of the Netherlands.' Masses, motets, psalms and hymns, madrigals and *canzone* are all well-represented. One unusual composition, for five voices, in the form of a narrative based on the Bible story Susannah, seems like an early prophecy of the sacred cantata, although the treatment is severely hymnlike and not dramatic. As a writer of madrigals and of *frottole* Willaert's position is discussed in another chapter; though it may be said in passing that in these, as in his sacred music, his individuality is marked, and his knowledge and musical skill evident.

Though a northerner by birth, Willaert became the founder of a school characteristically Italian, and his work seemed, to his contemporaries, to embody the very spirit of Venetian life, in its richness and variety. He brought to the Italians the inheritance of the Netherland art, turned it into new and interesting channels, and revealed to later masters what possibilities of color lay hidden under the strictness of its laws.

Upon the death of Willaert, his pupil, Cipriano di

melody might attain its most natural end on the lowest note of the scale by a gliding half-step. It should be noted that relatively few indications of chromatic alterations in *musica ficta* were written in the score. Singers were given a special training to enable them to recognize when such alterations were necessary, and to alter correctly. Thus in connection with *musica ficta* elaborate rules were formulated which are not distantly removed from our own rules of harmony.

Rore,* was appointed to the high office at St. Mark's. Works of di Rore, including madrigals, motets, masses, psalms, and a Passion according to St. John, were held in high esteem by his contemporaries, especially in Munich, where they were frequently performed under the direction of Lassus. Duke Albert of Bavaria caused a handsome copy of a collection of his church compositions, graced by a portrait of the composer, to be placed in the Munich library, where it still remains.

Following di Rore at St. Mark's came Gioseffo Zarlino,† a member of the order of Franciscan monks, also a pupil of Willaert, and a theorist of great importance. Few of his compositions have survived, but his theoretical writing, *Instituzioni harmoniche, Dimostrazioni harmoniche,* and *Sopplimenti musicali,* remain in an edition of Zarlino's collected works published in four volumes in 1589. There are also in manuscript French, German, and Dutch translations of the *Instituzioni,* which contain, besides an important discussion of the third, and the major and minor consonant triad, a clear explanation of double counterpoint in the octave, twelfth, and in contrary motion; of canon and double canon in the unison, octave, and upper and under fifth, with numerous examples based upon the same *cantus firmus.* Baldasarro Donati and Giovanni della Croce, both distinguished musicians, in turn succeeded Zarlino as *maestro di capella* at St. Mark's.

Elsewhere in Italy important composers appear, native Italians who bring to the Netherland art the Italian gift of melody and sweetness. Constanzo Festa,‡ a Florentine, occupies an especially important place. Riemann says of him, 'He can be looked upon as the predecessor of Palestrina, with whose style his own

* *Cf.* Chap. IX, p. 275.
† Born 1517 at Chioggia, in Venetia; died 1590 at Venice.
‡ *Cf.* Chap. IX, p. 274.

has many points of similarity. He was the first Italian contrapuntist of importance, and gives a foretaste of the beauties which were to spring from the union of Netherland art with Italian feeling for euphony and melody.' Constanzo Porta, a pupil of Willaert, was successively *maestro* of the Franciscan monastery at Padua, and of churches at Ravenna, Osimo, and Loreto. Gafori (or Gafurius, 1451-1522), cantor and master of the boys at Milan cathedral, left many theoretical writings of great value. Arcadelt, already mentioned as a writer of madrigals, composed a volume of masses, published both in Venice and by Ballard and Leroy in Paris in 1557. Jacob Clemens, better known by the name of Clemens non Papa, to distinguish him from the pope—a fact which attests, in a jocular way, his popularity—was a Netherlander, and one of the most famous composers of the epoch between Josquin and Palestrina, leaving to posterity a large number of masses, motets, and chansons, besides four books of hymns and psalms, the melodies of which were taken from Netherland folk song.

Meantime in Germany we find also musicians of distinction, though as yet none of the very first rank. One of the oldest of these was Adam von Fulda, a learned monk, known both as a composer and theorist, and the author of at least one highly esteemed motet, *O vera lux et gloria.* Heinrich Finck, Thomas Stolzer, Ludwig Senfl, and Heinrich Isaak all deserve an honorable place in the history of German music of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Isaak, though for some time considered a German, was born in the Netherlands, probably about 1450, and was one of the most learned of the contemporaries of Josquin. He lived for a time in Ferrara, afterward becoming organist at the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent. From this post he went to Rome, and finally entered the service of the Emperor Maximilian I at Vienna. Petrucci

printed five of his masses in 1506, and included many of his other compositions in collections published early in the century. Manuscript works are in the Munich, Brussels, and Vienna libraries. His part songs were considered models of their kind, and are not lacking in interest even to-day. It is to Isaak we are indebted for the lovely *Inspruck, ich muss dich lassen,* used as a hymn by the followers of Luther, and by Sebastian Bach in the St. Matthew Passion.

Ludwig Senfl (born 1492, died about 1555), a pupil and the successor of Isaak at the court chapel of Maximilian I at Vienna, was later chapel-master at Munich. According to Riemann, Senfl was one of the most distinguished, if not the most important, of the German contrapuntists of the sixteenth century. He is further remembered as a friend of Luther. A great number of his compositions are preserved, among them being masses, motets, odes, songs, and hymns for congregational singing.

The work of the brilliant Clement Jannequin in Paris was largely secular and will be treated in another chapter. It may be remarked in passing that types of composition perfected by him were to have great influence upon instrumental music before the end of the century. In England John Merbecke (d. 1585), Christopher Tye (d. 1572), Thomas Tallis (d. 1585), and William Byrd (d. 1623) match the Netherlands in skill and bring to their music not only the spirit of the new age, but the peculiar melodiousness which has always characterized English music. The works of Tallis became great favorites and in the famous English collections of music for the virginals toward the end of the century several of his vocal works appeared as transcriptions. Byrd must be ranked as one of the most daring composers of the time. Though he conformed to the new religion he remained at heart a Catholic, and his great works are akin to those of the greatest Catholic com-

posers on the continent. He has, indeed, been called the Lassus of England. Here, too, must be mentioned, though belonging almost more to the next century, Thomas Morley (d. 1602), John Dowland (d. 1626), and perhaps the greatest of all English composers except Henry Purcell, Orlando Gibbons (d. 1625). All these men were composing at the end of the century, especially madrigals and other secular forms famous not only for their great technical skill, but for their remarkable sweetness and expressiveness. They were all, moreover, skillful instrumentalists and brought music for the harpsichord to a state far advanced beyond anything on the continent. John Bull (d. 1628) was not only a master of the art of counterpoint but a virtuoso on both organ and harpsichord, whose match could be found only in Andrea and Giovanni Gabrielli in Venice.

Everywhere the Renaissance spirit was at work, but prosperous Venice stands out clearly as the centre of the new movement which so colored and remodelled music. Effects of double choirs, chromatic harmonies, tendencies toward definiteness of form, and even the combination of voices and instruments within the church itself, all marks of the changes which were affecting the development of music, all signs of the liberation of music from the sway of the church and of its closer relationship with passionate active life, are first found in the works of the composers who were connected with St. Mark's cathedral. But these men were really pioneers and the results of their innovations, though radical and far-reaching, were hardly foreseen. They sowed seeds, so to speak, which were to grow and flower long after their death. We have now to consider how the art of the Netherlanders grew to a present perfection in the works of two men—Orlando di Lasso and Pierluigi da Palestrina—both of whom, but particularly the latter, pursued an ideal un-

touched by the modern forces playing upon music about them; an ideal which, moreover, they attained and by attaining brought to an end the first great period in the history of European music.

IV

Orlando di Lasso * was born in the town of Mons, in Hainault, probably in 1530. The Flemish form of the name, Roland de Lattre, seems to have been abandoned early in favor of the Italian. The fate of the musically gifted boy, both during and long after the Middle Ages, was a choir school; and accordingly Orlando was entered as chorister in the local church of St. Nicholas. A writer named Van Quickelberg, giving an account of Lasso in 1565, says that he quickly came to a good understanding of music, and that the beauty of his voice caused him to be twice stolen from the school in which he lived with the other choristers. Twice also his 'good parents' rescued him; but, finally (at the age of twelve), he became attached to the suite of Ferdinand of Gonzaga, Viceroy of Sicily, with whom he travelled to Italy. Orlando stayed for some time in Naples, Rome, and Milan, continuing his studies, and then seems to have undertaken a long journey through France and England. By the year 1555 he was settled in Antwerp and rather widely known as a composer. Two years later Albert V, duke of Bavaria, called him to serve as chamber musician at his court in Munich. Duke Albert was a liberal man, a connoisseur of art, and, oddly enough, a man of some fame both in the athletic and in the religious world. He founded the famous royal library of Munich, to which we have had frequent occasion to refer, and enriched it during his

* Also called Orlandus de Lassus.

lifetime with many valuable manuscripts and objects of art.

At first Lasso, being unfamiliar with the German language, filled rather a subordinate position among the duke's musicians; but in 1562 he was appointed master of the chapel, which included both the choir and an orchestra. From this year on, up to the time when the illness attacked him which resulted in his death, his career was one of ever-increasing success and prosperity. He was called the 'Prince of Musicians.' In 1570 he was ennobled by the Emperor Maximilian II, and in the year following Pope Gregory XIII decorated him with the Order of the Golden Spur. On visiting Paris he was received with great favor by King Charles IX; while at home Duke Albert assured him his salary for life and appointed three of his sons to honorable positions in the chapel. The successor of Albert, Duke Wilhelm II, not only confirmed Lasso in his position, but presented him, in appreciation of his services, with a house and garden, and also made suitable provision for his wife. Neither the favor of royalty nor the admiration of princes, however, could render him immune to ill fortune. His last few years were clouded by mental trouble and melancholia. In June, 1594, he died, and was buried in the cemetery of the Franciscans. The monastery has been destroyed, but the monument to Lasso was preserved and now stands in the garden of the Academy of Fine Art in Munich.

Although the name of Lasso is not so well known to the world to-day as that of Palestrina, his career was a remarkable one. In the oft-mentioned Munich library, among other works of the master, is a manuscript copy of his most famous work, the 'Penitential Psalms,' written between 1562 and 1565, but not published until some time later. At the performance of these psalms Duke Albert was so impressed and af-

MVSICVS ORLANDVS D. BAVAR. IASSVS
Quantum exit medica reliquos Orlandus in arte
Ætherius propior tantum abit ille choris

fected that he caused a manuscript copy to be made and placed in his library. It was richly ornamented by the court painter, Hans Mielich, and other artists, and magnificently bound in leather.* Duke Albert was perhaps an exceptional patron; but, granting that to be the case, Lasso's career shows how honorable was the position held by a great musician in his century.

In the duke's chapel were upward of ninety singers and players, several of them composers of merit, all of them musicians of ability. The choir singing was well balanced, and correct in pitch, even through the longest compositions. The general order of the ducal service was for the wind and brass instruments of the orchestra to accompany the mass on Sundays, and festival days, and, on the occasion of a banquet, to play during the earlier courses of the dinner. The strings, under Morari as conductor, then enlivened the remainder of the feast until the dessert, when Lasso and his choir of picked voices would finish the entertainment with quartets, trios, or pieces for the full choir. For chamber music, all the instruments would combine. The duke and his family were keenly interested in Lasso's work, passionately fond of music in itself and proud of the celebrity of their chapel master. It is one of the instances where reverence and appreciation came to the artist during his lifetime; and it is not to be doubted that these fortunate circumstances had a tremendous influence on the master's work. His industry and fertility were prodigious. Compositions amounting to two thousand or more are accredited to him—masses, motets, magnificats, passion music, frottole, chansons and psalms. There are two hundred and thirty madrigals alone. Following the lead of Willaert, he sometimes used the divided choir and composed for

* This work contains the portrait which we reproduce herewith, and which, taken in connection with its setting and the history of the man, is of uncommon interest.

it, and also showed himself not indifferent to the growing taste for psalm singing.

The Seven Penitential Psalms, composed at the duke's request, are for five voices, some numbers with two separate movements for each verse, the final movement, *Sic erat,* for six voices. Each psalm is a composition of some length, though modern ideas as to their tempi, and therefore as to the time required for their performance, show considerable variation. 'It is not true that Lasso composed the Penitential Psalms to soothe the remorse of Charles IX, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, but it is more than probable that they were sung before that unhappy monarch, and his musical sense must indeed have been dull, if he found no consolation and hope expressed in them. This is no everyday music, which may charm at all seasons, or in all moods; but there are times when we find ourselves forgetting the antique forms of expression, passing the strange combinations of sounds, almost losing ourselves in a new-found grave delight, till the last few moments of the psalm—always of a more vigorous character—gradually recall us as from a beautiful dream which "waking we can scarce remember" . . . So unobtrusive is its character that we can fancy the worshippers hearing it by the hour, passive rather than active listeners, with no thought of the human mind that fashioned its form. Yet the art is there, for there is no monotony in the sequence of the movements. Every variety that can be naturally obtained by changes of key, contrasted effects of repose and activity, or distribution of voices, are here; but these changes are so quietly and naturally introduced, and the startling contrasts now called "dramatic" so entirely avoided, that the composer's part seems only to have been to deliver faithfully a divine message, without attracting notice to himself.' *

* J. R. Sterndale-Bennett, in Grove's Dictionary.

De Lasso's secular compositions are placed by critics almost unanimously even above his ecclesiastical work. The madrigals and chansons reveal force and variety of treatment, bold experiments with chromatics, a freer modulation and a keen sympathy for the popular elements of music. 'Lasso shed lustre on, and at the same time closed, the great epoch of the Belgian ascendancy, which, during the space of two hundred years, had given to the world nearly three hundred musicians of marvellous science.' * The decline and fall of the Netherland school, which began with the death of its last great master, Lasso, are ascribed by Fétis to the political disturbances and wars of the sixteenth and succeeding centuries. But it seems more probable that the intricacies of the contrapuntal art created a desire for simpler methods. The genius of Italy and Germany, upon whose soil the last Netherland masters flourished, supplied the very qualities which brought the art to perfection.

V

It has already been related how, even as early as 1322, the liberties which careless, ignorant, or sacrilegious singers took with the Roman service had called forth denunciations from the papal chair. The genius of the Netherland schools, dominating church music as it did for a space of two hundred years, was, like Janus, two-faced. On the one hand, it developed a musical technique so complete and perfect in form that any further progress without an entire change of principle seemed impossible; and, on the other, it fostered a dry, mathematical correctness that led, at its worst, to an utter disregard of expression and feeling. Only the genius of a Josquin or a Lasso rendered

* Kiesewetter: *Musikgeschichte.*

learning subservient to beauty of expression and carried out the true mission of art.

In Rome, however, no master had yet appeared who was great enough to force into the background all the unsanctioned innovations by which unscrupulous musicians sought to reach the popular taste. From the time of the return of the popes from Avignon (1377) Roman church music had been a continual source of dissatisfaction to the Curia. As has been pointed out, the plain-chant became more and more overladen with contrapuntal embellishments; the mass sometimes exhibited a labored canon worked over a long, slow *cantus firmus,* the different voices singing different sets of words entirely unconnected with each other. Sometimes, again, the ritual was enlivened by texts beginning with the words *Baisez moy; Adieu, mes amours;* or the much tortured *Omme armé,* of which the tunes were as worldly as the text. If these objections were lacking, another was likely to be present in the absurdly elaborate style, which rendered the words of so little importance that they might as well not have existed at all. The mass, 'bristling with inept and distracting artifices,' had lost all relation to the service it was supposed to illustrate. 'It was usual for the most solemn phrases of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, or Agnus Dei to blend along the aisles of the basilica with the unedifying refrains of the lewd chansons of Flanders and Provence.' * In this manner the beautiful ritual was either degraded by pedants into a mere learned conundrum, or by idlers into a sacrilegious and profane exercise; and the reproofs of popes and councils had, so far, not availed to keep out these signs of deterioration, much less to lift church music to the level of the sister arts.

In this situation the Council of Trent was forced to recognize the degradation of music and to take up the

* Grove: Article on 'Palestrina.'

question of a thorough and complete reform. In 1564 Pope Pius IV authorized a commission of eight cardinals to carry out the resolution of the council, whose complaints were mainly upon the two points indicated above—first, the melodies of the *canti firmi* were not only secular, but sung to secular words, while the other parts often sang something else; secondly, the style had become so excessively florid as to obscure the words, even when suitable, and render them of no account. Some of the members of the council, it is claimed, declared that it was better to forbid polyphony altogether than to suffer the existing abuses to continue. In the passionate desire for the purification of the ritual even Josquin's works had been abandoned, not because of any lack of admiration for them, but because he shared necessarily in the general condemnation of all music not Gregorian. A modest and devoted composer, however, had already attracted the attention of two of the members of the pope's commission, Cardinals Borromeo and Vitellozzi, and it was to him they now turned in their need.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was born in 1526 * of humble parentage in Praeneste, or Palestrina, a town in the campagna four hours from Rome. Early in life he came to the Imperial city, studied with one of the excellent masters resident there, and then returned to his native town to become organist in the cathedral. In 1547 he married the daughter of a tradesman, by whom he had several children. In 1551 Pope Julius III called him to Rome as choir-master of the St. Giulia Chapel at St. Peter's, where he succeeded Arcadelt. Three years later, after the publication of a volume of masses, dedicated to the pope, Palestrina received an appointment as singer in the papal choir. He had a poor voice, he was a layman, and married. Each one of these reasons was sufficient, according to the constitution of the

* Riemann: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, II¹.

Roman College, to forbid his appointment, and Palestrina hesitated in his acceptance of the post. Not wishing, however, to offend his powerful patron, and naturally desirous of obtaining a permanent position, he resigned his office at the St. Giulia chapel and entered the pontifical choir. This appointment was supposed to be for life, and the young singer may well have felt discouraged when, after four years, a reforming pope, Paul IV, dismissed him with two other married men. In place of his salary as singer the pope awarded him a pension of six scudi (less than six dollars) a month. With a wife and family such a reduction of income seemed nothing less than ruin to Palestrina, and, stricken with nervous fever, he took to his bed. A little more courage, however, might have served him better; for his dismissal did not spell ruin. In two months he was invited to fill the post of choir master at the Lateran, and his fortunes again brightened. He was able to keep his pension, together with the salary accorded him in his new position. After six years he was transferred to the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, where he remained for ten years, his monthly salary being about sixteen dollars. In 1571 he was reappointed to his old office of chapel master at the Vatican.

Palestrina was chapel master at the Santa Maria Maggiore at the time of the appointment of the commission for the reform of church music. The Cardinals Borromeo and Vitellozzi, both active members, recommended that one more trial be made to harmonize religious requirements with the better taste of the people. A story has prevailed for centuries that Palestrina was requested to write a mass which should serve as a model of what the music of the sacred office should be, and that he submitted three works, which were first performed with great care at the house of Cardinal Vitellozzi, before a group of clergy and singers. There

was an immediate and enthusiastic verdict in favor of the compositions. The first two were good, and were sufficiently praised; but the third, the *Missa Papæ Marcelli,* as it was afterward called in honor of an earlier pope, was felt to be the epitome of all that was noble and dignified in ecclesiastical music, the crown and glory of the service itself. It was first sung in the papal chapel in 1565. In appreciation of the noble work, Palestrina was made official composer to the pontifical choir—a post created especially for him—and succeeding popes confirmed him in his office as long as he lived.

The story of the commission of cardinals and the musical reforms instituted by the Council of Trent has been so emphasized by some historians as to represent Palestrina as the 'savior' without whose services church music would virtually have ceased to exist. Such a view, however, requires some modification. Church music was not 'saved' by Palestrina in any such sense, though its debt to him is, nevertheless, almost inestimable. There was never any intention on the part of the cardinals to abolish it altogether from the church; but they had long been seeking a form and a style which should be intelligible, acceptable both to the devotee and the layman of cultivated musical taste, and suitable to the office which it holds in the sacred service. Ambros goes so far as to deny that there was any cause for such wholesale purification; but, in view of the facts cited, this is evidently an error. That the evil was widespread is proved by the action that provincial synods took, in following the example of the Council of Trent, Milan and Cambrai in 1565, Constance and Augsburg in 1567, Namur and Mechlin in 1570.

From the time of Josquin attempts had been made by one and another of the masters mentioned in this chapter to make a more suitable connection between text and melody, to simplify the contrapuntal writing,

and to put expression into their art. To some extent, as has been seen, they accomplished their purpose. Josquin, Festa, Gombert, Morales, Rore, and especially Willaert and Lasso, have all left evidences of their noble endeavor in this direction. It was left to Palestrina, however, to achieve a high level of style, the excellence of which was reached by the other masters only in isolated instances; and to prove to the cardinals that the music of the church could be lifted to its true dignity. He differs, not in form, but in æsthetic principle, from his contemporaries; but it is precisely that difference which raised Palestrina to the pinnacle of fame.

The outward facts of his later life offer little that need detain the reader. Among his patrons were popes and princes, but they did not, on the whole, distinguish themselves by kindness or generosity to the musician. Jealousy among members of the choir with which he was so long connected was a constant source of unpleasantness, and his faithful work was meagrely rewarded. His largest regular earnings amounted to something like thirty dollars a month, and he apparently never dreamed of any revenue from the sale of his works. Indeed, it is unlikely that any very substantial reward ever came to him with his added honors as a composer. Neither could he have added much to his gains by teaching, for in the whole course of his life he taught but seven private pupils, three of whom were his own sons. Continuous poverty was accompanied by domestic griefs of the deepest kind. Three sons, all giving promise of inheriting the father's intellect and genius, died one after another; the wife with whom he was especially happy died in 1580; and the one remaining son became a profligate and worthless spendthrift. It may be added that not long after the death of his first wife he married a wealthy widow and so was well provided for till the end of his life.

J. Cousse 1829

One event in the master's life stands out in contrast to the general sadness. In 1575, the year of Jubilee, fifteen hundred singers, belonging to two confraternities of his native town, made a pilgrimage to Rome, and utilized the occasion to do him honor. Dividing themselves into three choruses, with priests, laymen, boys, and women among their number, and with Palestrina himself at their head, they entered Rome in a solemn and ceremonial procession, singing the music of their great townsman. This was perhaps the only public honor Palestrina received during his lifetime.

Among the friends of his later life were S. Filippo Neri, his confessor, a favorite pupil named Guidetti, Ippolito d'Este, and Giacomo Buoncompagni, a nephew of Pope Gregory XIII. The activity of his early years continued almost to the very end. The record of the second half of his life is but a long catalogue of his publications. Whole collections of magnificent works were dedicated to popes, cardinals, or princes, some of whom returned the honor with scant courtesy. The last of these was a collection of thirty *madrigali spirituali* for five voices, in honor of the Virgin, dedicated to the grand-duchess of Tuscany, wife of Ferdinand de' Medici. Baini and Dr. Burney are full of praises for these last productions. While he was eagerly at work on another volume—seven masses to be dedicated to Pope Clement VII—he was taken ill and died, February 2, 1594, comforted and cared for to the end, not by his mean and worthless son, but by his saintly friend, Filippo Neri. By order of the Curia he was buried with all the honor of a cardinal or prince in the Basilica of the Vatican, while the citizens of Rome, high and low, followed him in sorrow to his grave.

VI

The immense number of Palestrina's works is astonishing even in that age of prodigious workers. The list appended to a prospectus of a proposed 'selected' edition of his works mentions ninety-three masses, one hundred and nineteen motets, forty-five hymns, sixty-eight offertories, three volumes of Lamentations; of litanies three books, of Magnificats two books, of madrigals four books—all of which are but a portion of his labors. The mass for Holy Thursday, *Fratres ego enim accepi,* the mass for the assumption of the Virgin, *Assumpta est Maria in coelum,* the motet, *Surge illuminare Jerusalem,* and the *Stabat Mater* for two choirs, are still in use in the papal chapel. The *Improperia,* (reproaches of the Lord to an ungrateful people), performed for the first time in 1560, immediately obtained a great renown, and were added at once by Pope Pius IV to the collection of the apostolic chapel. This work also has been repeated in the Sistine chapel yearly on Good Friday up to the present time. Its performance made a profound impression upon both Goethe and Mendelssohn. The latter thus describes the singing of the pontifical choristers in the rendition of this work: 'They understood how to bring out and place each delicate trait in the most favorable light, without giving it undue prominence; one chord gently melted into another. The ceremony, at the same time, is solemn and imposing; deep silence prevails in the chapel, only broken by the reëchoing "Holy," sung with unvarying sweetness and expression.'

The *Missa Papæ Marcelli,* which proved so important an instrument in the history of church music, is written for six voices, soprano, alto, two tenors, and two basses. Immediately upon its production its popularity became very great. Cardinals quoted poetry in

its praise; the pope commanded that a special performance be given in the apostolic chapel, and that it be transcribed into the chapel collection in unusually large characters. Baini compares its grandeur to that of Thirty-third Canto of the Inferno. Curious legends as to its origin sprang up, and unauthorized 'arrangements' went through several editions. A poor adaptation for four voices was made by Anerio, and others for eight and twelve voices by other followers of the Roman school. It is perhaps the best known example of the celebrated Palestrina style.

In a classification of Palestrina's work the German writer Hauptmann distinguishes three styles, corresponding generally to the master's very early, adolescent, and mature years. The first shows markedly the influence of his Netherland predecessors and teachers. The melodies move along independently without 'melting into chords,' and the predominating character is fugal and canonic. In this phase of his work he was still influenced by the 'evil fashion' of the period, which for the most part subordinated the true meaning of the music to the display of contrapuntal science. This quality is shown occasionally, also, in later compositions, as, for example, in the mass with the well-worn *L'omme armé* theme, wherein he boldly met the Flemish composers on their own ground and proved that he could write as learned counterpoint as they. In these examples he seems intentionally to have adopted the florid style of his predecessors, overlaying the theme with erudite contrapuntal figures, and rendering it elaborate and difficult.

The mass *Assumpta est Maria* may be said to illustrate the second style, which is in marked contrast to his preceding work. The music is much less elaborate, the voices proceeding, for the most part, simultaneously in smoothly flowing phrases. The third, that known as the Palestrina style, illustrated so famously by the

Pope Marcellus mass, is a combination of all that was best in the Netherland and Italian schools. It is a vocal style in simple counterpoint, mostly note against note, with only a moderate use of imitation, and an avoidance of chromatics, violent contrasts, and everything approaching the dramatic. At first he followed the custom of using secular tunes for sacred works; but in his best period he almost invariably employed the ancient plain-song melodies in connection with the proper sacred text. Many of his *canti firmi* are placed in the soprano instead of in the tenor voice. Strict attention is shown to syllabic declamation, and to a simple, singable arrangement of the voice parts, which is frequently based upon a succession of pure triads. The harmony is gentle and serene, and the devices for obtaining contrasts and tone color are conspicuous by their absence; while the whole is imbued with sincerity, devotion, and a great sense of beauty. Thibaut, a Frenchman, says of him, 'He is so completely master of the ancient ecclesiastical modes, and of the treatment of the simple triad, that repose and enjoyment are to be found in his works in a greater degree than in those of any other master.'

Contrasts and similarities between the lives of di Lasso and Palestrina suggest themselves at once. The one a northerner, aristocratic, famous, successful, rich, welcomed in the most courtly and cultured circles of Europe, encouraged and richly rewarded in all his endeavors: the other a southerner, poor, burdened with sorrows and difficulties throughout his life, pursuing his calling without regard to favor or disfavor. Yet they were alike in their prodigious activity, in their lovable and gentle natures, and in their devotion to the Catholic Mother Church. Both were rich in genius—the northerner more emotional, more sensuous in harmony, more dramatic, the southerner more calm and serene in the beauty of his work. Palestrina seems to

have stood apart, untouched both by the swarming intellectual novelties of the time, and by the revolutionary spirit within the church. Great of intellect indeed he must have been, for he conquered a vast field of learning, and reached a point where his art was objective, universal, and perfect according to its type.

With the death of Palestrina the first great period of what we may call modern music, in distinction from the music of the ancients, which was purely melodic, came practically to perfection which was an end. A few distinguished composers carried on for a while the traditions of the vocal polyphonic style, now perfect, chief among whom were Giovanni Nanino (d. 1607), Thomas Luis de Vittoria (d. *ca.* 1613), Felice Anerio (d. 1614), and Giovanni Anerio (d. *ca.* 1620), possibly the brother of Felice; but new and powerful influences were at work to turn men's minds from this perfection and rapidly so to modify the style itself that the characteristics and the spirit of it vanished. It had grown up within the church, it was apt only to the expression of exalted religious rapture, and even before the century which brought about its flawless perfection the more passionate spirit of man was seeking to express itself. Such a spirit brought color and fire and dramatic vigor to music, even to music of the church such as we have seen in Venice; and such emotional force the exquisitely adjusted mechanism of polyphony was in no way suited to express. We must remember that it was essentially religious music and that pronounced rhythm and sharp dissonances were consciously avoided; furthermore, that at its best it was to be sung without accompaniment and that a conjunct, smooth movement of the voice parts was necessary since singers in choir without accompaniment cannot be sure to sing wide or unnatural intervals exactly. Since rhythm, dissonance, and sudden leaps or turns in melody are the chief means whereby music

can express emotional agitation, the Palestrina style was not even remotely suitable to the new and active spirit spread abroad through the influence of the Italian Renaissance, which had discovered new worlds, new arts, new sciences, new life. The delicate and infinitely complicated structure could not but be rent and distorted. Luther with his chorales, the English with their new service and the coming of the Elizabethan age, even Willaert in catholic, rich Venice with his two organs and his double choirs had forecast the end of the Palestrina style.

Several features of this marvellous style were destined to disappear simply with the natural growth of music. In the first place the polyphonic ideal, in its highest, strictest sense—the submersion of many melodies in a river of sound in which no melody is evident, the complete suppression of individual personal utterance—was a mediæval and essentially intellectual ideal. It could not long maintain its hold against the inborn natural desire of the individual to sing out his own personal feelings. For it meant the suppression of melody, an unnatural restraint. In the second place, from the time when two melodies were first joined the knowledge and appreciation of harmony were bound to grow—that is, the knowledge of the effect of dissonances and consonances following each other, and it needed but a matter of time for men to come to plan music with the end of producing such effects in a definite sequence. Now in polyphony the consideration of the progression of chords was entirely secondary to the ideal of writing several independent voice parts. Of course the influence of the church modes was strong in delaying the development of the harmonic bases of music, they were iron bands about harmony and they quite fettered modulation, for it was forbidden to pass in the course of a piece from one mode to another. But here again the Palestrina style is related to the

scholasticism of the Middle Ages. The ecclesiastical modes were in general closely connected with the philosophy of æsthetics, on the one hand, and with mathematics, on the other; and all the popular music which has been preserved from the Middle Ages shows an unmistakable and deeply significant choice of those modes only which resemble our own major and minor.

In the suppression of individual emotion, in the banishment of rhythm and other active startling elements of music in order to produce the effect of vagueness and mystery, in the limitation of music to ecclesiastical modes, the Palestrina style is the flower of the spirit of the Middle Ages, of a spirit that in the lifetime of Palestrina himself was already dissipating in thin air. He stands looking backward upon the centuries which had given him birth, while on every hand the activities of man were urging impetuously forward. To the new aims, therefore, we must now turn our attention.

F. B.

CHAPTER XI

THE BEGINNINGS OF OPERA AND ORATORIO

The forerunners of opera—The Florentine reform of 1600; the 'expressive' style; Peri and Caccini; the first opera; Cavalieri and the origin of oratorio—Claudio Monteverdi: his life and his works.

I

In tracing the genesis of the connection of music with dramatic action we shall rely upon the delightful and exhaustive study of M. Rolland entitled *L'Opéra avant l'opéra,** in which he shows our most popular species of musical art to have descended from the pastoral play and the 'antique' drama with music, this in turn to have come out of the *sacre rappresentazione* (sacred representations) and the *maggi,* the May festivals, which still exist in Italy. The sacred representations again were a union of the fourteenth century *divozione* or liturgical plays (dramatizations of the religious offices), and the national festival of Florence, held in honor of its patron saint, John. These remarkable festivals date back to the thirteenth century and were staged so sumptuously and elaborately as to require months of preparation.

Research has shown that the words of the sacred plays were at first entirely sung, and by analogy with the traditional May festivals we are even informed as to the nature of the melodies used. There were traditional *cantilena* forms for every part of the action: prologues, epilogues, prayers, etc., and we meet

* In *Musiciens d'autrefois* (3me ed., 1912), p. 19.

already the familiar variety of solo, duet, trio and semi-choir, even though all the voices sing in unison. Popular songs and dance music were interpolated as well as *Te Deums* and *Laudi*, and the intermezzi, later so popular, were already in evidence. The costuming and personation of characters were consistently carried out and the properties and mechanical devices (*ingegni teatrali*) were the creations of the genius of such men as Brunelleschi in Florence and Leonardo da Vinci in Milan. Parallel phenomena are the *Marienklagen* existing in Germany from the fourteenth century on, the music of which was similar to the liturgical chant of the church.*

We have mentioned the interest which Lorenzo de Medici took in the carnival celebrations. The sacred representations engaged his attention no less: following the spirit of the age, he secularized them to some extent, substituting classic myth for Christian allegory. The fifteenth century saw the spread of Humanism in the wake of the Revival of Learning, and the sixteenth beheld its ultimate triumph. The theatre felt the effect of the movement no less than architecture and sculpture. The love of show, of rich display, which obsessed the princely despots of the period, coupled with their ardor for the beauties of antiquity, found its expression in the classic tragedies, the comedies and pastoral plays which now taxed the talents of poets, of painters and of musicians. Far from being exclusive, these spectacles became the popular amusements in such centres as Rome, Urbino, Mantua, Venice and Ferrara. On festival occasions they assumed phenomenal proportions, as for instance at the marriage of Lucrezia Borgia to the son of Hercules d'Este, when five comedies by Plautus were played in one week in

* An example of a *Marienklage*, dating from the sixteenth century, is reprinted by Eitner in the *Publikation älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musikwerke*, Vol. X.

a theatre holding five thousand spectators. Music always played an essential part in the performance, though mostly in the form of *intermedii,* which, as they assumed a more independent dramatic character and developed their dancing features, became in themselves the forerunners of the ballet-opera.*

Notable exceptions, in which the purpose of music was something more than mere relief, were the great poet Poliziano's *Orfeo* given in 1474 with music by one Germi, and also a *Dafne* produced with music by Gian Pietro della Viola, in 1486, both at Mantua, 'that same Mantua in which there were to be played one hundred and forty years later the *Orfeo* of Monteverdi and the *Dafne* of Gagliano.' The coincidence is indeed striking as is also the fact that the Florentine 'inventors' of opera in 1600 chose as their first themes the same two classic tales. It would be interesting to compare the 1474 version of the perennial—and ideal—operatic subject, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, with that of the mighty Gluck; but, alas, the music has not been preserved to us. Mr. W. J. Henderson, who has endeavored to prove this *Orfeo* to be the first opera of record, concludes that the *frottola,* in its solo arrangement, formed the basis of the music; that the dialogue was probably sung throughout; that there were choruses and ballets—all the accessories of modern opera in fact.† It was nevertheless nothing more than an 'antique' drama with music, with the only difference that in this case the subject was a musical one, that the leading character represented a singer, and was in fact impersonated in the original performance by one of the most famous Italian vocalists of the period, Baccio Ugolino, who sang to the accompaniment of his own lyre (*lira da braccia*). The

* A description of a highly developed example of this species, the *Ballet-Comique de la royne,* will be found in Chap. XIII, p. 450.

† *Cf.* W. J. Henderson: 'Some Forerunners of Italian Opera.' (1913.)

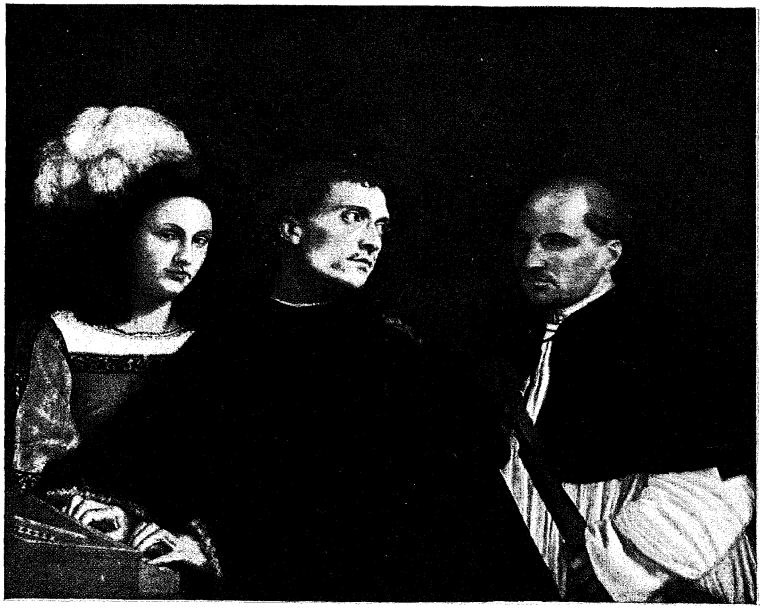
scenery of this performance at the Palazzo Gonzaga was simple, only one setting being required. The stage was divided, one side representing the Thracian countryside, and the other the realm of Pluto. But Poliziano later revised the work, dividing it into five acts and elaborating it along the line of the *sacre rappresentazione.*

Not only at Florence and Mantua, but in Venice, in Ferrara at the court of Hercules I, in Rome under papal auspices, in fact wherever there was a fastidious aristocracy, these 'antique' *comedie* flourished. Among artists, Leonardo da Vinci at Milan, Raphael at Rome, Andrea del Sarto at Florence, Dosso Dossi at Ferrara, and numerous other immortal names of the Renaissance are associated with their production, and among musicians Alphonso della Viola, Antonio dal Cornetto, Claudio Merulo, Andrea Gabrieli, and many more. As Humanism succumbs to the Catholic reaction, with the pillaging of Rome by Charles V (1527) and the taking of Florence soon after, as liberty of thought is crushed by the Inquisition, as petty tyrants supersede broad-spirited despots, the harmless pastoral play succeeds the *comedia.* Sumptuous settings and meaningless music now outweigh dramatic significance. Poets such as Ariosto and Tasso are the authors of these spectacles, and another generation of great artists, John of Bologna, Salviati, Bernardo Bumlalente and perhaps Michael Angelo, lavish their skill upon them. Indeed both painters and poets in this age are musicians. Music had at this epoch obsessed the entire thought of Italy. Painters, writers, the *élite,* especially in the north of Italy, madly abandoned themselves to it. Nearly all great Venetian painters of the sixteenth century: Giorgione, Bassano, Tintoretto, Giovanni d'Udine, Sebastiano del Piombo, were musicians. Let us recall the numerous paintings of 'concerts,' either sacred (Bellini) or profane (Giorgione, Bonifazio, Ver-

onese); remember how in the 'Marriage at Canaan' of the Louvre, Titian holds the bass viol and Bassano the flute. Sebastiano del Piombo was celebrated as lute player and singer, while Vasari recognized more willing Tintoretto's talent as a musician than as a painter. At the court of Leo X music superseded all the other arts. The pope decreed for two *virtuosi,* charged with the superintendence of St. Peter's, a stipend equal to Raphael's. A Jewish lutenist, Giammaria, received the title of count and a palace. A singer, Gabriel Merino, became archbishop of Bari. Finally, it will be remembered that, when Leonardo da Vinci presented himself at the court of Ludovico il Moro at Milan, it was, according to Vasari, not in the capacity of painter, but as musician. Girolamo Parabasco said, 'I am a musician, not a poet' and the great Tasso, 'Music is, so to speak, the soul of poetry.'

Beccari's *Sacrificio,* produced in 1554 with music by Alfonso della Viola (which is preserved), before Hercules II of Ferrara, the *Aretusa* of Alberto Lollio (1563), the *Sfortunato* of Agostino Argenti, and the famous *Aminta* of Torquato Tasso,* given with music at the court of the grand duke of Tuscany in 1590, are examples of pastoral plays. Tasso's collaborators and advisers in this production were none other than Emilio de' Cavalieri and Laura Guidicioni (perhaps also Ottavio Rinuccini, at any rate a spectator) who, we shall presently see, are to become instrumental in the creation of true opera. In the same year these two produced privately their pastoral plays with music, *Il Satiro* and *Disperazione di fileno,* the first known examples of opera, for they were set to music throughout, and probably even in 'representative' style, as it

* Tasso's fervent love for music is well known and reflected in his writings. The particular musician of his choice was Don Carlo Gesualdo, prince of Venosa, who set the music for a number of Tasso's madrigals.



was called. Five years later (1595) followed *Il Giuco della cieca,* played before the Archduke Ferdinand, but the music of none of these works has been preserved.

II

The opera, then, had arrived. But, unaware of the fact, its so-called inventors, caught in the spell of antiquarian research, their imaginations transported by the glories of the classic past, turned their vision back to ancient Greece—to Athens, that prototype of their own city of Florence—where Æschylus unfolds before the eyes of his countrymen a spectacle worthy of the gods. They see no analogy in their madrigals and the dithyrambic chorus of the ancients, no parallel in their *sacre rappresentazione* to the Eleusynian mysteries and Bacchic festivals, but, rejecting all that has gone before, attempt to resurrect the magic power of music as an organic part of human speech, and the revival of the greatest product of classic genius—the Greek tragedy. Such was the purpose of the *camerata,* that genial circle of amateurs, *literati* and musicians which gathered at the house of Giovanni Bardi, count of Vernio, in Florence, one of those famous 'academies' which were the centres of the intellectual life of Italy in the sixteenth century.

Jacopo Peri, an erudite musician and a favorite singer; his younger colleague Giulio Caccini of Rome; the already familiar Emilio de' Cavalieri, inspector-general of the artists in Florence; Luca Marenzio, the most eminent musician of the city, and Christoforo Malvezzi, all of whom had collaborated on the *intermezzi* to Bardi's *L'Amico fido* in 1589, were, together with Jacopo Corsi, a wealthy and intelligent patron of music, and Vincenzo Galilei, father of the great astronomer, the chief members of the circle, besides the host.

These men, liberal thinkers, modernists, literati rather than professional musicians, were out of sympathy with the pedants of the contrapuntal school, the 'Goths' against whom Galilei * had already published his diatribe in 1551. The Latin translations of Aristoxenus' Ptolemy's and Aristotle's treatises on music, published in 1562, aroused their keenest interest and discussion, and their admiration of the plastic arts which had signalized the Renaissance in the preceding centuries now found an echo in their attempt to reconstruct a lost ideal. In 1585 the great Andrea Gabrieli had written choruses for the solemn performance of *Œdipus Rex* at Vincenza, and in 1589 Luca Marenzio wrote a 'Combat of Apollo and the Dragon,' drawing his inspiration from the descriptions of the *Nomos Pythikos* of the Greeks (see Chap. IV, p. 127). Convinced, despite the lack of examples, of the greater expressive power of Greek music with the employment of simpler means, Galilei, after long research with the aid of Bardi, now composed for a solo voice and instrumental accompaniment Dante's 'Lament of Ugolino,' in the so-called *stile rappresentativo,* the representative style. His experiment proved suggestive if not altogether successful, and the task was next taken up by Caccini,† who, with probably more natural talent than Galilei, set himself to the composition of several *canzone* in the new style,

* B. Florence, *ca.* 1533, d. there, 1600, was a pupil of Zarlino, an excellent musician and an able lutenist and violinist. He published two books of madrigals and made the first known experiments in the "representative" style of melody. He was a deep student of Greek music, discovered the hymns of Mesomedes (transcribed successfully only 200 years later) and published 'Dialogue on Antique and Modern Music' (1581), a diatribe against Zarlino and his methods. His son, Galileo Galilei, the great astronomer, is said to have constructed his first telescope from an organ pipe belonging to his father.

† Giulio Caccini (surnamed Romano), b. Rome *ca.* 1550; d. 1618 in Florence, where he had lived since 1564 and was employed at court as a singer. During the winter of 1604-1605 he sojourned in Paris at the request of Queen Maria (de Medici). Besides the works mentioned in our text, he wrote *Fuggilotio musicale* (madrigals, etc.) and a sequel to his *Nuove musiche.*

a simple cantilena over a figured bass (see Chap. XI, p. 355) which provided a harmonious support to be executed by instruments (lute or theorbo). Endowed with a beautiful and well-cultivated voice, he achieved a genuine success among his sympathetic circle. To make sure of himself, however, he proceeded to Rome, where his new songs were applauded by an assemblage of connoisseurs. Thus encouraged, he appealed to his literary friends for verses in all metres, which he promptly set to music. Some years later (1601) these were published under the title *La nuove musiche* ('The New Music') with a remarkable preface, in which their author claims the merit for having originated the *stile rappresentativo*, and which contains so much technical information for singers that it may well be considered the first vocal method. Caccini's *arie* were disseminated largely through his vocal pupils, for they adapted themselves admirably to the beautiful Italian style of singing of which he was one of the first masters. We may mention incidentally that his daughter, Septimia, became one of the famous singers of the period and aroused the admiration of Monteverdi. Her sister, Francesca, achieved distinction both as singer and composer.

Caccini, though he was probably the first to use and secure public acceptance of the *arioso* style, was—despite his own claims—not the originator of the true recitative. That distinction belongs to Jacopo Peri, a more learned musician though a less genial personality, who meantime had begun the application of the representative style to the drama.* Corsi, the successor of Bardi (now become papal chamberlain

* Jacopo Peri (b. Florence, Aug. 20, 1561, d. there Aug. 12, 1633) was a pupil of Christoforo Malvezzi. He became chief director of music at the court of Florence under Francesco, Ferdinand I and Cosimo II de Medici. Besides his *Dafne* and *Euridice*, he published *Le varie musiche del Sig. Jacopo Peri, etc.* (1609), the recitatives for Monteverdi's *Arianna*, a war-play (*barriera*), *La precedenza delle dame*, and a part of Gagliano's opera, *La Flora*.

in Rome), as host and patron, was a close friend of the poet Ottavio Rinuccini (d. 1623). Both were familiar with the experiments of Cavalieri in the realm of dramatic music. After joint deliberation, the two appealed to Peri 'to give a simple proof of the power of modern music' by setting Rinuccini's dramatic poem *Dafne,* a scene of which had already been experimented with by Bardi. 'Remembering that it was a question of dramatic poetry and that the melody must at all times be modelled after the words,' Peri concluded 'that the ancients employed musical forms which, more elevated than ordinary speech yet less regularly designed than common song melodies, were half-way between the two.' In an effort to forget every known style, he at first attempted to rediscover the *diastematica* of the Greeks, the quarter-tone interval, in the inflections of ordinary speech. According to his own testimony, he closely observed persons speaking, so that he might reproduce as naturally as possible their expressions, whether moderate or passionate. Thus he decided to have quiet expressions sung in half-spoken tones over a resting instrumental bass. In emotional moments, however, the voices proceeded in a more animated tempo and by larger intervals instead of strictly conjunct motion, while the accompaniment indulged in more frequently changing, and sometimes dissonant, harmonies. In other words, he used what we know to-day as recitative.

The importance of the principle thus introduced—the preference of expressive quality to purely musical effect—cannot be over-estimated. The germ of romanticism itself lies in this departure, the elements of Gluck's reform, of Wagner's creed, repose in the assertion of Caccini that 'one is always beautiful when one is expressive.'

Peri's *Dafne,* after charming the circle of intimates, was performed at the house of Corsi one evening dur-

ing the carnival of 1597, the composer singing the rôle of Apollo, in the presence of the Grand Duke Ferdinando de Medici, the cardinals dal Monte and Montalto, the poets Piero Strozzi and Francesco Cini and 'a great number of gentlemen.' 'The pleasure and the stupor which seized the audience is inexpressible,' said Gagliano later in the preface to his own *Dafne*. Every person there felt that he was in the presence of a new art. Spurred on by this victory, Rinuccini composed his *Euridice* for the festivities occasioned by the marriage of Maria de Medici to Henri IV, king of France, in 1600. Peri again wrote the music, though at the performance, which took place on October 6 at the Pitti palace, some of the numbers of Caccini's version (composed after Peri's) were substituted because of Caccini's influence with the singers. The title rôle was sung by the famous Vittoria Archilei, 'the Euterpe of Italy,' while Peri himself impersonated Orpheus. The event not only aroused the greatest enthusiasm among the distinguished assemblage, but its echoes resounded through all the courts of Europe and tremendously stimulated interest in the new art.

The score of *Euridice* has been reprinted in Florence in 1863 and may be examined by the student. It consists of 48 small octavo pages of simple recitative dialogue written over a figured bass, interspersed with five-part choruses in predominatingly diatonic harmony. The preface indicates that the figured bass was executed by a clavier, a *chitarrone*, a *lira grande* and a large flute (in one place a *triflauto*—triple flute—is added), but it is not clear how the musicians managed to produce effective harmony without written-out parts. The impoverished quality of the music indicates a distinct retrogression from the contrapuntal compositions of the day, and vastly so when we consider the *a capella* style of Palestrina. Its striking novelty alone accounts for the extraordinary effect it had

upon the hearers. Its value was not in its intrinsic quality but in the direction which it indicated, the path which was to lead to untold riches of sound.

Following closely upon the heels of Peri's work came the setting of the same poem by Caccini, who had already produced *Il rapimento di Caffalo* (1597, performed 1600); Marco da Gagaliano (1575-1642) was already at work along similar lines and in 1608 produced his *Dafne* at Mantua—one year after Monteverdi's 'Orfeo' which, however, marked so great an advance that it might have been written a generation later. Before discussing that master, it will be necessary to consider the utilization of the representative style in another field—that of the sacred drama or oratorio—by Emilio de' Cavalieri,* whose dramatic essays in connection with Laura Guidicioni have already been mentioned.

The origin of the oratorio is twofold: the prose *oratorio latino* and the Italian *oratorio volgare.* The former is derived from the mediæval liturgical plays already spoken of, and the 'mysteries' and 'moralities' of the fifteenth century are clearly forerunners of it. The *oratorio volgare,* a didactic poem independent of scripture text, had its point of departure in the *esercizii spirituali* (scriptural lessons), instituted by the priest Filippo Neri (afterward canonized) at Rome. He became the founder of the congregation of Oratorians, which regularly met for Bible study under his leadership. On certain evenings of the week his sermons were preceded and followed either by a selection of popular hymns or by the dramatic rendering of a biblical scene. From the place in which these were first enacted, the oratory of the church of

* Emilio de' Cavalieri (or del Cavaliere), b. *ca.* 1550; d. March 11th, 1662, in Rome, was, before his appointment at Florence, organist of the *Oratorio del S. Crucifisso* in S. Marcello (Rome). His earliest works are madrigals, as we know from a reference to the "eighty-sixth, in six parts," in his preface to the *Rappresentazione.*

S. Maria in Vallicella, they received their name—Oratorio.

Just as the dramatic madrigal was built upon the style of the secular madrigal, so these sacred dramas probably modelled themselves after the 'spiritual' madrigal. While Peri and Caccini were still engaged in their experiments, Cavalieri, in 1600, staged in Neri's oratory his most important creation *La Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo,* slightly antedating Peri's *Euridice.* Like that work, it was written in 'expressive' style, of which Cavalieri may indeed have been the real originator. Cavalieri's work belongs to the province of sacred opera, being the first of this important branch of the music drama, which is further represented by such works as Landis' *S. Alessio* (1637) and Marazolli's allegorical opera *La Vita humana* (1658). It is distinguished from the true non-scenic oratorio, which is associated with the artistic personality Carissimi. To show the distinction between his work and that of Florentines, however, we quote the criticism of his *Il Satiro,* by Giovanni Battista Doni, the historian of the Florentine monodists: 'It must, however, be well understood,' he says, 'that these melodies are very different from those of to-day (seventeenth century) which are written in the *stile recitativo;* the others (of Cavalieri, etc.) are nothing but ariettas with all sorts of artifices and repetitions, echoes and other similar things, having nothing to do with the good and true dramatic music. . . .'

On the other hand, Cavalieri's own instructions show his wonderful practical knowledge in the performance of opera, and give us an exact idea of the first operatic theatre: 'The hall should not hold more than a thousand spectators comfortably seated, in the greatest silence. Larger halls have bad acoustics: they make the singer force his voice and they kill expression. Moreover, when the words are not understood the

music becomes tiresome. The number of instruments must be proportioned to the place of performance. The orchestra is invisible, hidden behind the drop. The instrumentation should change according to the emotion expressed. An overture, an instrumental and vocal introduction, are of good effect before the curtain rises. The *ritornelle* and *sinfonie* should be played by many instruments. A ballet, or better a singing ballet, should close the performance. The actor must seek to acquire absolute perfection in his voice, physique, gestures, bearing, and even his walk. He should sing with emotion—as it is written—not one passage like the other; and he must be careful to pronounce his words distinctly, so that he may be heard *che siano intese*. The chorus should not think they are excused from acting when they do not have to sing. They must feign to listen to what is going on; they must occasionally change their places, rise, sit down, make gestures. The performance should not exceed two hours. . . . Three acts suffice and one must be careful to infuse variety, not only into the music but also the poem, and even the costumes. . . .'

'Gluck and Wagner,' says Romain Rolland, 'have added little to these rules!'

III

The *favolo in musica* (it was not called opera as yet) had taken root; its first tender shoots, delectable morsels for a fastidious intellectual aristocracy, nurtured in the soil of princely patronage, had given evidence of hardihood. But it was an exotic, a hot-house plant, limited by its very nature to the homes of aristocracy: in order to flourish and grow to noble proportions it had to bathe in the sunlight of popular favor; it required the care of a master, a genius who

substituted imagination for synthetic reason, intuition for experiment. That master was Monteverdi. If the works of Peri and Caccini smelt of the midnight oil, there coursed in *his* creations the red blood of humanity. If their music was 'representative' of the exact meaning of the word, attuned to the niceties of accent and inflection, *his* portrayed the gamut of human passions, the soul itself, even at times violating literary fidelity to reach that greater purpose. While they had 'thrust upon them' the honor of creating a new method of expression, he, the musical genius of a century, could deliberately choose between the old and the new—and he chose the new. 'With him the new evolution began and the new edifice, hardly risen above the ground, became a magnificent monument. Well did he see what was lacking in the conception of the Florentines: he understood that to fight successfully against the resources of counterpoint new riches had to be brought, different but equally valuable. His prodigious inventive genius discovered them: he found them in harmony, in the expressive accent of the monodic chant and in the variety of instrumentation.'

Claudio Monteverdi (in old prints spelled Monteverde, though by himself as here) first saw the light of the world at Cremona, in May, 1567. His father was probably a physician, at any rate a man of culture, who provided for his children an education far above the average. Claudio gave early evidence of musical talent and was placed under the tutelage of Marc' Antonio Ingegneri, the choirmaster of the cathedral and musical arbiter in Cremona, with whom he studied viola playing, singing and composition. Ingegneri was a composer of genius; his *Responsoria,* published anonymously, were for a long time ascribed to Palestrina, and, while worthy to be ranked with that composer's, they contain harmonies and modulations foreign to his style.

Here, in the master's originality we seem to find the explanation of his leniency toward his pupils' vagaries, for Monteverdi from the first showed a most persistent tendency to break the rules of counterpoint. He first appears as composer at the age of sixteen, publishing in 1583 his *Madrigali spirituali* for four voices and in the following year his *Canzonette a tre voci,* which were full of irregularities and forbidden progressions. His first book of five-part madrigals was brought out in 1587 and it was evident that he was already reaching out for realms unknown, though perhaps not yet equal to the leap. An extraordinary addiction to dissonances, frequent use of the seventh in suspensions, and a number of unpleasant progressions characterize these otherwise beautiful madrigals, as well as the additional collections, printed in 1590, 1592 and 1603; but they nevertheless became popular, the last two going eventually through eight editions.

Meantime Monteverdi had become an able violist and aroused attention to his playing in high quarters. His virtuosity opened him the doors to the service of Duke Vincenzo di Gonzaga at Mantua, whither he went in 1590 as violist and singer. His modernist tendencies aroused the opposition of local musicians, which, already evident when he became *maestro di capella* in 1602, broke out openly as the madrigals of his fifth book, including the beautiful *Cruda Amarilli,* made their appearance. These drew the fire of Giovanni Maria Artusi, theoretician, and *canonicus regulatis* of S. Salvatore, who attacked him in a polemic, 'On the Imperfections of Modern Music' (1600), not mentioning his name, but quoting his newest compositions (still in MS.) as examples. The attack is so amusing, and its adherence to the perennial arguments of contemporary criticism so striking that we cannot refrain from quoting it in part.

'Though I am glad to hear of a new manner of com-

position it would be more edifying to find in these madrigals reasonable *passagi,* but this kind of air-castles and chimeras deserves the severest reproof.' Like all critics he cites the example of the masters: Palestrina, Porta, Merulo, Gabrieli, Gastode, Lasso, etc., whose works these 'moderns' should emulate, but instead 'are content to concoct as great a noise as possible—a confused mixture of unrhyming things, and mountains of imperfections.' 'Behold, for instance,' he cries, 'the rough and uncouth passage in the third example (by Monteverdi). After a rest the bass attacks on a diminished fifth against the upper voice.' Not after a consonance, mind you, as the masters have done, but after a rest—and, as for sevenths unprepared—preposterous!

Monteverdi had had the temerity not only to use the dominant seventh without 'preparation' according to the established rules, but to use other dissonances, diminished and secondary sevenths, ninths and elevenths in connection; he had introduced a freedom in the movement of voices and a sequence of chords the audacity of which still startles us to-day. 'Modern! Certainly he is modern by these tokens,' says Tiersot, after hearing the Paris revival of *Orfeo.* 'But truly and spontaneously has he made his discoveries, they were so little searched for, that neither his contemporaries, nor his successors, perhaps not even himself, have understood their value; and it has taken us centuries to arrive at a true appreciation of their merit.'

Monteverdi replied to his critics (for the cry had been taken up by others and the argument developed into an open war) with the publication of his fifth book of madrigals, containing all the criticized compositions with not a note changed. He even travelled to Venice to supervise the printing so as to insure accuracy. In his preface he said that, having endeavored to express emotions hitherto unexpressed in music, it was neces-

sary to invent new tone combinations. New harmonies, moreover, required new modulations. He insisted that more than one point of view is worthy of consideration and advised the *cognoscenti* to study further and learn 'that the modern composer builds upon a foundation of truth.' These madrigals reached eventually nine editions, were reprinted in Antwerp and Copenhagen and spread their composer's fame throughout Europe.

Moreover, Monteverdi stood in high favor with his patron, a man of understanding who shared his ancestors' leaning to lavish patronage of the arts. He accompanied Duke Vincenzo on his war expedition to Hungary, when in 1595 he supported Rudolph II against the Turks, and in 1599 went with him to Flanders, whence he brought a new style of composition, the *canto alla francese,* which he afterwards adopted in his *Scherzi musicale a tre voci.*

His domestic circumstances, however, were none too favorable. He had married in 1595 Claudia Cattaneo, the daughter of a violist and herself a singer at the ducal court, where her salary even exceeded Monteverdi's meagre pay. She had borne him two sons and existence became more and more difficult. In 1607 she was taken seriously ill, and continued hardship and solicitude for his family spurred Monteverdi to complaint, but without result. His duties were most onerous, for besides directing the music at court he was obliged to participate in the church service and the many special performances which the duke's love of festivities occasioned.

One of these occasions was the carnival of 1607, when Vincenzo, familiar with the successes of Peri and Caccini at Florence, determined to surpass them at Mantua, and intrusted the preparation of the work to Monteverdi. The result was the *Favolo di Orfeo,* the text for which had been written by Allessandro Strig-

gio, son of the famous madrigalist. It was performed, first in the *Academia degl Invaghite,* and again, on February 24th, and March 1st, in the ducal theatre. Its success was enormous; the music aroused the most profound admiration, as did also the book, which, by order of the duke, was printed, so that the audience might follow it during the performance. As *Orfeo* is the only opera of Monteverdi preserved to us in its entirety, we may examine the score in Robert Eitner's edition with modern notation and the figured bass harmonized, and so realize the tremendous advance it shows, over Caccini's 'Euridice,' for instance (reprinted in the same publication).* The style of the recitative is similar, though it shows much greater fluency, the harmonies are beyond all comparison richer and more varied; dissonances, especially the diminished seventh, being used with great dramatic effect; suspensions and anticipations are particularly frequent and there are many daring chromatic modulations, such as from G♯ minor to G and from E♭ major to E, reminding of Wagner's use of these same progressions. Instead of a simple figured bass we have in the instrumental numbers at least a completely worked-out harmonic structure, and for the first time instruments are used in definite combinations with respect to their various *timbres.* There is an agreeably varied sequence of *toccata* (overture), recitative, *arioso, ritornelle,* chorus and *sinfonie* (at ends of acts); in fact, we find in *Orfeo* all the elements of the later opera, from the instrumental introduction to the final movement, even though in small proportions and of modest pretentions. The ternary form, later so important, opens its way here and there, i. e. in the first movement of the second act. The great bravura aria is also represented and offers opportunity to the skillful singer to exhibit his technique. (Sometimes the vocal part ap-

* *Publikation älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musikwerke,* Vol. X.

pears in two ways; first in the simple unadorned form, and directly under it in elaborate coloratura arrangement, evidently leaving the choice to the singer.) The orchestra instruments play together only in the instrumental numbers; in the choruses they simply double the voice parts; but in accompanying the solo voices the composer has made use of a curious device of associating the tone quality of a certain instrument or group of instruments with each character. This is indicated in the table of characters, which at the same time shows the composition of Monteverdi's orchestra:

CHARACTERS	INSTRUMENTS
Music, prologue	Two *gravicembani* (similar to spinets)
Orfeo	Two bass viols
Euridice	Ten violas
Chorus of nymphs and shepherds	One double harp
Speranza	Two small French violins
Caronte (Charon)	Two *chitaroni* (zithers)
Chorus of infernal spirits	Two *organi di legno* (small pipe organs)
Proserpina	Three *bassi da gamba* (large viols)
Pluto	Four trombones
Apollo	One *regale* (reed organ)
Chorus of shepherds who dance the *Moresca* at the end	Two cornets, a flute *alla vigesima seconda;* a *clarino* (small trumpet) and three muted trumpets

This recognition of a psychological correspondence between characters or situations and the timbre of instruments is interesting because it points the way to the dramatic utilization of orchestra color.

Directly after *Orfeo,* Monteverdi produced his *Ballo delle Ingrate,* a ballet scene in the manner of the usual *intermezzi.* The arduous labor and nervous strain incident to these performances forced upon him the

necessity of a rest, which he spent in a visit to his father's house at Cremona. There his wife, again stricken, died, and, plunged into grief, he himself succumbed to illness. His income reduced to his own earnings, he sent through his father an earnest appeal to the duke for greater emolument, and, that denied, a request to be released from further duty. But instead he was speedily summoned to return, in order to prepare a musical spectacle for the coming nuptials of the heir apparent, Don Francesco, and Margherita, infanta of Savoy. His financial condition was now slightly improved and, spurred by the prospect of greater fame, he plunged into the task of setting the music of a new opera, *Arianna,* for which Rinuccini had been commissioned to write the book. The work was to be staged on a scale far beyond anything attempted till then, the best singers available were engaged, and the rehearsals occupied five months. It is interesting to note that another opera, *Tiede,* by Cini and Peri, competed for the honor of the performance at these festivities, but was rejected in favor of *Arianna.* Peri was, however, commissioned to write the recitatives for *Arianna.*

The performance took place May 28th, 1608. The theatre, we are told by the official historian, Follino, was not large enough to accommodate all the nobles visiting in the train of foreign princes and the natives had to be denied admittance. While the play itself made a deep impression, in the music Monteverdi had surpassed himself. 'The orchestra behind the scenes,' continues Follino, 'accompanied the beautiful voices throughout, following the character of the singing most faithfully. The lament of Arianna, abandoned by Theseus, was performed with great feeling and pictured so touchingly that all the auditors were profoundly stirred and not a lady's eye remained tearless.' This 'Lament' afterwards became one of the most popular pieces in Italy. After Cosimo II (de

Medici) in 1613 obtained the score of *Arianna* from the duke and performed it in Florence it was said that the favorite selection was heard in every house that contained a clavicembalo or a lute.

The sumptuous ballet *Idropica,* for which Monteverdi composed the prologue, was produced during the same festivities. The succeeding period saw no diminution in the output of this indefatigable composer. In 1610 we see him in Rome suing for the favor of Clement VIII, to whom he presents his ecclesiastical compositions, which were, however, inferior to his secular works. In 1612 Duke Vincenzo died, and Monteverdi resigned his post to accept the most coveted musical office in Italy—that of choirmaster at St. Mark's, Venice. His position there became the source of the greatest satisfaction to him, for, aside from the fact that he received three hundred ducats yearly, and after 1616 four hundred, while finally his total income increased to six hundred and fifty, he was honored and esteemed better even than his illustrious predecessors, Willaert, de Rore, Zarlino, etc. He enjoyed the title of *maestro di capella* to the republic, brought the music of St. Mark's, where he had a choir of thirty singers and twenty instruments, to a high degree of perfection, superintended the chamber music of the city as well and earned the most general popular appreciation.

In 1621 he composed the music for a requiem in memory of Duke Cosimo II of Tuscany, and from Strozzi's enthusiastic description it was a most gorgeous tone creation, better fitted for a theatre than a church. Similarly in 1631 he was called upon to provide the music for a great thanksgiving in St. Mark's after the terrible plague raging through Italy, and responded with a mass, in the *Gloria* and *Credo* of which he introduced a trombone accompaniment. His creative power in the dramatic field remained unabated. *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (half dram-

atic, half epic, with narrative *testo,* connecting the speeches), composed in 1624, was followed in 1627 by *La finta pazza Licori* (by Strozzi and Striggio) and five intermezzi for the marriage of Odoarde Farnese at Parma, and in 1630 by *Proserpina rapita.* The first public opera house in Venice, the Teatro di San Paolo, and soon after the Teatro S. Giovanni e Paolo, for which Monteverdi furnished *L'Adone* (1639), *Le nozze di Enea con Lavinio* (1641) and *Il ritorno d' Ulisse in patria,* which last is preserved. Thus, even in his last two years he was occupied on a series of operas, of which *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (1642) was his last great effort. It might be added that his seventh book of madrigals had appeared in 1619 and his eighth, the famous *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi,* in 1638.

In his *Combattimento* Monteverdi introduced a new effect, now familiar as the orchestral *tremolo,* which so startled the musicians that at first they refused to play it. His own explanation for its use is curious: 'I have recognized,' he says, 'that our passions or emotions are expressed in three grades: anger (violence), temperate moderation, and humility or petition. . . . These three grades are clearly reflected in music, namely, in that of excited, tender, or moderate character (*concitato, molle e temperato*).' Finding only the two last represented in the older music, he studied the question of spondeic and phyrric verse metre which the Greeks had transferred to music. Taking the *semibreve* (whole note) for the unit of the former, he proposed to break it up into sixteen *semicromes* (sixteenths), which are to be played in succession upon one note to obtain the faster measure, which he calls *concitato* (tremolo).

This is but one instance of how Monteverdi constantly sought instructions from the ancients. In his letters of 1633 and 1634 he tells of his labors to rediscover human melody and the music of the passions.

He had no one to guide him, and no books but Plato. The information which Galilei conveyed interested him, but he was careful not to be misled by the phantom of a lost art. He believed that in following his own principles he would be more true to classic thought than by trying to apply its formulas. He claimed that modern art has profited more from a study of Greek thought than from old-fashioned harmonic exercise. Thus the ancients had rendered to music the same service which the century before they had rendered to sculpture. They had taken it out of the studied formulas and had led artists back to the sole observation of nature. 'Indeed, a real Renaissance opens at the beginning of the seventeenth century with Monteverdi—the Renaissance of the heart in the language of music.'

Monteverdi's artistic creed and theories are to some extent perpetuated in his *Selva morale e spirituale,* dedicated to the Empress Elonora Gonzaga, and published in 1640. Monteverdi died in Venice November 29, 1643, and was buried with great honors at the *Chiesa dei Frari.* With his death we see opera finally established in that place in the heart of the Italian people which it has held to this day. Others had already taken up the work, notably his pupil, Pietro Francesco Cavalli, whose genius burst upon the world in 1639 with his *Nozze di Teti.*

With the next generation the Florentine school divides into the new Venetian school founded by Giovanni Legrenzi (1635-1672), of which Antonio Lotti was to become the leader, and the Neapolitan, which found its guiding genius in Allessandro Scarlatti, one of the most conspicuous musical figures of the seventeenth century. From him and his teacher Francesco Provenzale (*ca.* 1669) there issued a long chain of masters and pupils—Francesco Durante (1684-1755); Leonardo Leo (1694-1744); Francesco Feo (1685-1740); Gaetano Greco (b. 1680), etc.—who developed the Ital-

ian opera in its narrowest sense—an opera that was purely vocal, whose chief aim was the production of beautiful melody and which paid a minimum of attention to orchestration and dramatic pathos. It was a purely musical school, and even more than that of Venice removed from the ideal of the Florentines. Against this school were ultimately to be directed the reforms of Gluck, whose theories are solidly founded upon the creed of Florence. Florence, then, is the true cradle of opera, also in its more modern sense, for the precepts there laid down have remained valid even to Wagner and the music drama of to-day.

C. S.

CHAPTER XII

NEW FORMS: VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL

Résumé of the sixteenth century—Rhythm and form; the development of harmony; figured bass—The organ style; canzona da sonar; ricercar; toccata; sonata da chiesa; great organists—The genesis of violin music; canzona and sonata—The sonata da camera; the suite—Music for the harpsichord—The opera in the seventeenth century; Heinrich Schütz.

DURING the sixteenth century a style of music attained perfection, and, as we have seen, two composers, Palestrina and Orlando Lassus, put upon it the final stamp of great personal genius. This style is known as the vocal polyphonic style. The music was written for choruses and for the most part was intended to be sung without accompaniment. Centuries of endeavor had gone to its development, during which composers bore in mind first and always a great ideal—the combination of many melodies in one euphonious whole. The result was a texture of music so nicely woven that in the mass of smooth flowing sound no one melody was evident to the ear, though many melodies moved simultaneously forward with seeming independence, each crossing and recrossing the others, each free to sustain a note while the others moved above and below it, all coming at certain points to dwell together in rich chords. Intended only for service in the church, it was a music perfectly expressive of a rapt and exalted state of religious devotion, from which had been expelled all the elements that might disturb and excite, all harsh intervals, all suddenness, all lively rhythm. It was woven about the Latin text of the mass and of other rites and ceremonies of the church; but except

for this connection with words it was without form and unconfined. Without rhythm and without symmetrical form—the very foundations upon which most music rests—it seems like an edifice floating in mid-air, without foundation, ethereal, mystical, and perfect. Such a music could indeed be brought no further after Palestrina and Lassus; but it left to the world a model of polyphonic technique which was to aid in the development and enrichment of subsequent music, and which has had an indirect influence upon every great composer since that time.

The last years of the sixteenth century gave evidence of a rebellion from the laws of polyphonic technique; yet the musicians are at first not so much actuated by a feeling of rebellion against this established form as by an enthusiasm for other kinds of music, which, during the centuries when all musicians gave their most serious thought to the development of polyphony, had been more or less neglected—kinds of music in which solo melody and rhythm play a part. Peri, Caccini, Cavalieri, and the other brilliant young men who, just before the turn of the century, composed music in a so-called new style, are not inventors of anything new, but experimenters with the simple kind of music which must have endured among the people through all the civilized ages of man. They sought to raise simple song into an art, and their experiments turned the attention of all men to those branches of music which had for centuries been considered beneath the dignity of serious effort. At the start, spurred on by the desire to restore the combination of music and poetry which had been practised by the Greeks, they became intoxicated by the sheer beauty of the human voice in single melody, and by the ever further discovery of the power of music to express live, poignant, human emotions beyond the ascetic rapture of religious devotion. Indeed, the desire to express new emotions

in melody and harmony and the sensuous delight in sound are the main causes of the remarkable developments of the seventeenth century which not only produced a new form of vocal music completely secular and independent of the church, though still bound to words, but also firmly established instrumental music untrammelled by words or adherence to text, beautiful and noble in itself alone.

Inasmuch as the marvellously perfect technique of writing polyphonic choruses for voices was suited only to the expression of the vague ecstasy which had formed it, composers were forced to invent a new technique and a new style of writing. The ways by which they arrived at this new style form the subject of this chapter. It will be seen that certain ones built directly upon the polyphonic style, that others developed solo melody and the solo adorned and elaborated by many devices; and that it was by a union of the two ways that at last the new style was made worthy and sufficient.

I

At the beginning of the century music was, so to speak, taken out of the church and set, free and weak, into the open world. At once social fashion seized upon it. Opera, for instance, became almost at once the fashion of the day. From the opening of the first public opera house in Venice in 1637 opera composers had to write their music with regard to popular success, in other words, with regard to what the public wanted; and since the public came soon to worship the human voice even more than the music, the composer and his works were often at the mercy of the reigning favorite singer. Moreover, in the course of the century, a race of virtuosi sprang into prominence, men who thrilled and electrified by display of technical

skill, and won the public by amazement. Music which is written only with the aim of giving the performer a chance to exhibit technical skill cannot be adjudged great music, nor even good music; yet the influences of attempts at virtuosity were of inestimable value to the growth of music in the seventeenth century, and indeed have been so at all times, though they often appear a fruitless, hollow sham. For the virtuoso discovers the utmost capabilities of his instrument and thereby widens the field of composition. In the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth as well, the composer and the virtuoso were one.

As we have already seen, in the church music of Palestrina and Lassus there was no active rhythm. The recurrence of regular beats was as far as possible disguised to avoid the excitement which a persistent, marked rhythm must convey upon an audience, and which is out of place in the mystical rites of the church. But in the seventeenth century composers of vocal music made more and more use of marked rhythm as a means of conveying emotional excitement; and instrumental composers, finding out little by little how lifeless music for instruments was when not animated by rhythm, made rhythm more and more persistent and obvious in their work. Along with the recognition of the life-giving power of rhythm came the appreciation of clearly balanced structural form, which is only a broader kind of rhythm.

Melody, rhythm, and symmetrical form seem to us the very essentials of music. It must be ever a source of wonder that for centuries musicians gave themselves to the development of a style of music which deliberately suppressed them. Yet those very musicians whose long labors are summed up and glorified in the works of Palestrina and Lassus laid the foundation upon which the art of modern music has been built. The polyphonic style, animated by rhythm and molded to

melody, became counterpoint, which, though in a sense the 'mathematics' of music and in the hands of an uninspired composer as dry as dust, is none the less the very essence of the art; and in the hands of a master the power and glory of man's mind in music. We shall see it prepared in the course of the century for the hands of perhaps the greatest of all composers, John Sebastian Bach.

Spreading gradually through all the music of the century came the new warm force of harmony. In the works of Palestrina and Lassus the appreciation of chords is often evident; but the attention of both was mainly centred upon the interweaving of many melodies, and for the most part the chords which resulted from the simultaneous sounding of many voice parts were not regarded in relation to each other, nor planned beforehand in a definite progression. The flow of the various parts was theoretically never directed nor influenced by an harmonic plan. Moreover, the vocal polyphony was written in the various types of scales known as the ecclesiastical modes, types which owed their peculiar characteristics to the position of the semi-tone steps within the octave. A change in the course of a piece from one mode to another—a modulation as we should say to-day—was most rarely ventured. In other words, there was no change of key. The practice of raising or lowering notes in the scales by sharps and flats in order to avoid harsh dissonances, or to let parts glide by the interval of a semi-tone into the chords of cadences, which practice was called *musica ficta,* had by the middle of the sixteenth century softened the rigor of the modes; yet during the first half of the seventeenth century the modes were still held to differ from each other in æsthetic qualities, and composers were still under the sway of the laws which governed them. The modes broke down gradually, it is true, and traces of their influence are found late in

the seventeenth century; but by the end of the century they had practically given way to the major and minor keys upon which our greatest music has been based. The subtleties of the modes were artificial. The popular music of the Middle Ages shows an instinctive choice of modes nearest our present-day major and minor scales.

The enthusiasm for melody in the seventeenth century at first allowed to an accompaniment only simple chords, to be played by lute or spinet, which very soon came to be regarded as harmonic progressions. These chords were not the result of the interweaving of various melodies, but were entities in themselves, and came to be appreciated as such. Freed from the laws of counterpoint and calculated to aid in the expression of keen emotion, sudden unprepared dissonances found their place in music. Chords were contrasted, their beauty and power were perceived, and they were studied and used for themselves. Moreover, it became the custom to play a few chords as prelude to an instrumental piece, and out of this custom there grew up in the course of the century a type of instrumental music called a Prelude, which was hardly more than an elaborate series of chords broken up in arpeggios, of which no finer example can be mentioned than the first prelude in Bach's 'Well-tempered Clavichord.' Thus the rich beauty of harmony came into music, the most subtle, the most colored, and the most profound of her expressions.

Perhaps the most characteristic mark of the new school of composition, and one which points suggestively to the way in which harmony developed, is the employment of what is known as a Figured Bass. The voice parts of the great polyphonic masterpieces were often printed separately, rarely together in one score; but the first operas were printed in score on two staffs, on the upper of which the melody was recorded, and

on the lower a single bass part, with figures and sharps and flats written under the notes to indicate the chords of which these notes were the foundation and which constituted the accompaniment. The origin of this Figured Bass is doubtful. It is possibly the result of the endeavors of Italian organists in the sixteenth century to free themselves from the task of playing those pieces written in the old style from a number of separately printed parts. Whatever its origin, it was perfectly suited to the monodists and to those who during the century wrote in the new style. It is indicative of the way composers centred all their interest in the melody, leaving the details of the accompaniment to the discretion and the taste of the accompanist, thought of in this case as a single player, using lute, harpsichord, organ, or any instrument upon which chords could be played. Evidently only a most simple accompaniment was expected, one which merely supported the melody with chords and attempted little or no contrapuntal intricacies. In cases where the accompaniment was given to a number of instruments the Figured Bass still served only for the instrument which could play chords, though the single notes of it might be reinforced by an instrument of low range such as the viol. For the other instruments which were to enrich the harmonies and add touches of orchestral color special parts were written. So the harpsichord became the centre of the group of accompanying instruments, and later the centre of the orchestra, apart from opera, supplying the harmonic basis of the music in solid chords. It continued to hold its central place until at the end of the next century Gluck took a definite stand against it.

The bass part itself was at first considered only as the foundation of the harmonies of the accompaniment. It was not, therefore, an independent melody, and was not planned in any contrapuntal relation with

the melody above it. But before the end of the first decade of the century composers began to give it movement and a character of its own, sometimes treating it in definite contrapuntal relation with the melody. Thus early did the composers of the new school turn to the science of counterpoint for aid in the construction of their music; thus early began the new and the old to work together.

The Figured Bass is significant, not only of the way composers came to an appreciation of the value of an harmonic foundation in music, and of how counterpoint came to the aid of the new music when it was leaden and uninteresting; it points also to the slow development of the orchestra, of the skill to write for groups of instruments in such a way that they could stand independently without the bolstering of the harpsichord or the organ. The orchestral style proper is the most complex style in music and was the slowest to develop. The employment of the Figured Bass is evidence of the inability of composers to master it during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

II

Yet though the composers of the seventeenth century were unable to master the problem of the orchestra, their accomplishments in the development of instrumental music, especially of music for small groups of string instruments, were most important. The achievements of the organists may be considered first, because in them the tradition of the polyphonic style most evidently perseveres, and because they were the first to develop a suitable instrumental style. The organ had been used in the churches from very early times and had been little by little improved until by the middle of the sixteenth century it was capable of great power

of tone and of some beauty and delicacy as well. During the sixteenth century music for the organ had been cultivated by three great Venetian organists, Andrea Gabrieli (1510-1586), Claudio Merulo (1533-1604), and Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612), nephew and pupil of Andrea. All three were world famous in their day, and men came from Germany, France, and England to hear them play and to study with them. The organs in St. Mark's cathedral were among the finest in Europe. Venice was brilliantly to the fore in music, and these three great organists were in the very front ranks of innovators. If their music sounds to us antiquated now it is because it was hardly in the power of three men in the span of half a century to develop a style of music for the organ which would be suited to its special qualities. It must not be forgotten that serious musicians had given relatively little thought to instrumental music, and had spent their lives in the perfecting of a style in vocal music. These three pioneers in organ music, therefore, had first to discover what sort of music sounded well on the organ. The problems were difficult, for not only was there the question of instrumental style, but likewise the question of form, since instrumental music, deprived of the continuity of a text to hold it in some measure together, must be wrought into definite form or else remain an inartistic chaos of sound. It can hardly be said that these early organists invented any clear self-sufficient forms. In fact, all form had to wait until the harmonic idea was clear in men's minds, until the middle of the next century. In the collections of their works are to be found *ricercari, canzone da sonar* and *toccatas;* but none of these has definite form. The ricercar was a piece in polyphonic imitative style, of serious character, ancestor of the instrumental fugue but very strongly bound to the vocal style of the day. It differed from the fugue in that it presented no clear so-called second

subject as foil or play-fellow to the main subject; and, moreover, in that there was even no consistent main subject throughout the piece, but a rambling from one to another suggested by it, and so on. Rhythm was indeterminate and frequently changing and there was little suggestion of a definite metrical structure of formal significance.

The canzona was originally no more than an arrangement for the organ of a secular song in polyphonic style, of the kind made popular in France in the period of the ars nova. (See Chap. IX.) The characteristic feature of these songs or *chansons* was a division of the music, following the stanzas of the poem, into several sections or strophes, some of which were in polyphonic style, others in simple 'note for note' harmony; and in working them over for the organ composers maintained the division. We shall see how composers for other instruments worked upon the same plan, and how in this plan lies the germ from which was to spring one of the so-called cyclic forms of music —a piece in several distinct movements, called *sonata da chiesa,* which was one of the direct ancestors of the symphony. However, in the early conzona there was no actual splitting up into movements, but only a series of rather distinct sections within the one movement differing from each other in style and rhythm. The organists used the canzona with rather more lightness than they ever displayed in the treatment of the ricercar, and in an attempt to animate and vary the simple song parts they hit upon not a few of those devices of ornamentation which came to play a great part in instrumental music of the eighteenth century. Andrea Gabrieli's canzona, *Un gai berger,* is an excellent example of the type, while the connection with its prototype is still distinct. Though there is a canzona for organ by Bach, the form never developed in organ music to any very great importance. It was assimilated on

the one hand by the ricercar and on the other by the more brilliant toccata.

The toccata was from the first a piece for display, and more than any other called the suitable organ style into being. The early toccatas might be called ventures in virtuosity. In them composers broke free little by little from the slow moving vocal style. They discovered how much more rapidly their fingers could move than voices could sing, and they learned to leap and run, so to speak, and gave over once for all the slow pace of the vocal style, which, admirably suited to voices, is intolerably heavy and dull upon instruments. The first attempts amounted to little more than rapid running of scales over a foundation of uninteresting chords; but by the end of the sixteenth century the chords had become more interesting and other runs than simple scales had been developed.

Two men especially are important in the history of organ music of the first half of the seventeenth century, Peter Sweelinck in Amsterdam and Girolamo Frescobaldi in Rome, the one commonly accepted as the first of the school of great organists of northern Europe, the other strongly influential in forming the style of the organists of southern Germany. The best of the northern and southern schools came to be united in John Sebastian Bach, the greatest of all organists, for whose music, therefore, Sweelinck and Frescobaldi may be said to have laid foundations. Both were daring, brilliant performers and equally bold and venturesome composers. Sweelinck was organist at the old church in Amsterdam from about 1581 to the year of his death, 1621; and Frescobaldi, considerably younger, organist at St. Peter's in Rome from 1608 to 1628, and again later in life. In both cities crowds flocked to the churches whenever these great men played.

Of Sweelinck's music that has been preserved a great part shows strongly the influence of the early Venetian

organists, but as might be expected he goes beyond them in instrumental effects; and in serious works, not calculated merely to display the skill of the virtuoso, he really creates a definite fugue form, independent of vocal style, animated and impressive. As a performer he was excited to experiments in effects which often led him into meaningless passage work, striking perhaps in his day, but to our ears childish and quite lacking in musical worth. But his influence was long felt and was the incentive to ever bolder and bolder efforts to expand the range of organ technique.

The younger Italian was no less daring, but seems to have been gifted with more sensitive instinct. He never offends by empty display; his style is consistently higher than that of any other organist of his day. His advance over his predecessors is most marked in his use of animated rhythmical subjects which he developed more often in genuine fugal style with answering counter subject and logical balanced form than in the aimless style of the older ricercar. Moreover, the passage work in his toccatas is built upon chord progressions which are very nearly free of the old modal restrictions and which are impressive in themselves and of genuine musical worth. Among works published in his lifetime are a set of fantasias (1608), all but three of which are in ricercar style, a set of toccatas (1614), a set of ricercari (1615), which show a marked improvement in construction over earlier works, a second book of toccatas in 1627, and in 1635 the most famous of all his works, the *Fiori musicali,* which contained pieces in all styles known at that time.

Among his pupils was the brilliant Saxon wanderer, John Jacob Froberger, who was for many years organist at the court of Vienna, for four years in Rome, two in Paris, later in London under romantic circumstances of which he has himself left an account, and still again

in the Netherlands, in Halle, in Vienna, and in France, where he died in 1657. In the work of such a man many influences are of course evident, but in his organ compositions that of Frescobaldi is most consistent, and thus the style of the Italian passes over into German usage.

After the death of Frescobaldi the importance of organ music in Italy steadily declined, but in Germany, both north and south, it grew steadily greater. It was built up on the foundations laid by the Italians themselves and by Sweelinck, who was strongly under the influence of the Italians; but there entered into it an element of purely German nature, the Protestant Chorale. These noble, expressive old melodies, though of varied origin—some sprung from the old plain-song melodies of the Roman ritual, others from the folk songs of the people—had become the religious folk song of the German Protestant. Upon them organists constructed a singularly lofty and expressive form of music known as the Chorale Prelude, which combined with the polyphonic skill—the remodelled heritage of the old masters—the genuine serious feeling of the chorale. As the name implies, the chorale prelude was played by the organist before the congregation sang the chorale, and might be regarded as the organist's prologue inspired by a musical text. Two kinds of the prelude were developed to a high state of musical excellence at the end of the seventeenth century. In one the chorale melody was treated in flowing contrapuntal style, appearing now in long notes, now in short, woven into a smooth texture of sound; in the other the melody was often brilliantly adorned with trills and turns and was made to stand boldly forth over an accompaniment which often presented a vigorous counter subject and which was filled with the most striking and daring devices of the virtuoso. The former was more in keeping with the spirit of the south German organists; one

of whom, Johann Pachelbel,* a Nuremberger, developed it richly. The other was fostered by the vigorous daring organists of the north, among whom the Dane, Dietrich Buxtehude,† stands out most conspicuously. We shall see later how much Sebastian Bach was influenced by these two great organists.

At the end of the seventeenth century organ music was independent of vocal style. Free of the old church modes, built solidly upon an impressive, harmonic foundation, animated by strong rhythm and varied by a thousand devices of virtuosity which had their being in the nature of the instrument itself, it makes evident the great changes which had come into music during the century. On the other hand, the general employment of a polyphonic style, for which the organ is of all instruments the best suited, and which moreover is in keeping with the dignity and noble solemnity of the instrument, shows the perseverance of those high principles of musical composition which had been first established and glorified in the vocal works of Palestrina and Lassus. And in the forms of Prelude, Toccata, Fugue, and Choral Prelude composers had found suitable forms in which their musical ideas could stand, apart from a text and self-sufficient as absolute music.

III

Inasmuch as the organ was the instrument for which the most suitable style was clearly to be found in a modification of the old vocal polyphony, organist-composers were spared much of the difficulty which hindered composers who strove to write for other instruments, or for combinations of instruments. We have seen that organ music, set upon its way by the

* B., Nürnberg, 1653; d. there, 1706. See Vol. XI.
† B., Helsingör, 1637; d. 1707. See Vol. XI.

Italians, was dropped by them before the middle of the century. All their interest in instrumental music came very early in the century to be centred upon music for the violin and instruments of that family. This is due to the fact that during that century there arose in northern Italy families of violin makers who, selecting generally the least clumsy of the types of bowed instruments, and particularly the violin, with marvellous workmanship and natural endowment of instinctive skill, developed them into instruments of a sweetness, flexibility, and power of expression which can be rivalled only by the human voice. The names of these violin makers have long been famous in the world, and neither their skill nor their success has ever since been matched. The first of them was Gasparo da Salo of Brescia, who worked in the last half of the sixteenth century and a little way into the seventeenth. Working a little later in Brescia was Paolo Maggini. The centre of the industry soon shifted to the town of Cremona, and it is in the list of the Cremonese makers that we find the names of the Amati family, of whom the last and most famous was Nicolo (d. 1648); the Guarneri family, of whom the last and greatest was Joseph, who lived far into the eighteenth century; and the great name of Antonio Stradivari, who, born about 1644, lived until 1737. The violin itself was in use early in the century, mostly as soprano in a group of viols. The rapid and remarkable perfection of it, however, soon attracted almost the exclusive attention of composers; and it was thus raised from a minor rôle in a group of instruments to be the head of all instruments.

The earliest attempts of Italian composers to write violin music were singularly childish and unsuccessful, and in most cases they seem stupidly against the simplest principles of instrumental music. But one must not forget that the only art of composition which had been developed to a technical excellence was the art of

vocal polyphony, and that the only skill the first instrumental composers had to bring to writing music for their instruments was the skill which they had acquired in the study of polyphonic choruses. We have seen that the early organ composers worked upon the same plan, but whereas a polyphonic style is essentially suitable to the organ, and the modifications of the vocal style necessary to convert it into a style for the organ suggested themselves naturally and obviously, the instrumental composers were face to face with a far more illusive problem. They progressed by much the same steps as the organists, but noticeably more slowly.

The form in which most of the earlier attempts were cast was the canzona. This, as we have already seen in organ music, was modelled upon the form of the French chanson of the sixteenth century, and its characteristic feature was a division into several short sections not actually cut off from each other, yet differing quite distinctly both in rhythm and in treatment; some being in the polyphonic style, others in a style of simple chords. The number of instruments might vary from four to sixteen, but the majority of early canzonas were written for four instruments, usually of the viol type. In a collection of canzonas published in Venice in 1608 there is one, however, written for eight trombones, and another for sixteen. The number of little sections in the canzona also varied. The tendency at first was toward a great many, ten or twelve; but with the general development of instrumental style came the lengthening of the sections and a consequent reduction of their number.

A typical canzona of this period is one for four instruments by Giovanni Battista Grillo.* It is made up of ten sections. The first, in common time, is but seven measures long, and is in the style of the ricercar, i. e.

* See Riemann: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, II², p. 127.

built upon an imitation of short motives. The second section is in triple time, in the general style of a galliard, a dance form of the time, and is eleven measures long. The third section is again in common time and in the style of a ricercar, and is twenty measures long. The fourth has ten measures, in the slow common time of the pavan; the fifth, eight measures in the triple time of the galliard; the sixth, six measures in the style of the pavan; the seventh, thirteen measures in galliard style. The eighth and ninth are repetitions of the first and second, and the whole series is brought to a close by a short coda of five measures. Those sections which are in polyphonic style are more or less closely related to each thematically. It will be observed that, of the ten sections, seven are made up of an irregular number of measures and cannot give to our ears an impression of rhythmical structure. One should notice, too, the return of the first two sections at the end, which gives some primitive balance to the little piece as a whole.

The obvious weakness in such a form of movement lies in the division into so many little sections, no one of which is long enough to claim the serious attention of a listener. True enough, the early works of the instrumental composers show very few rhythmically animated themes which could suggest any considerable treatment and development; but in the few cases where such themes do appear there is not space enough in a section for the composer to do anything with them, and they drop out of the piece almost as soon as they have awakened in the listener the desire to hear more of them.

The natural development was toward the extension of the section, therefore, until each made the impression of a definite and well-balanced whole; and from that it was but a step to cutting off the sections one from the other by pauses. That is what happened.

The canzona grew from a movement in many little sections to the ripe form of a piece in four distinct movements to which by the middle of the century was given the name *sonata da chiesa.* Among the first to write sonatas of this type was Giovanni Legrenzi, who published a set of them in 1655. Legrenzi is one of the most gifted composers of the time, not only of operas, in connection with which his name is most often heard, but of instrumental music as well, of which the sonatas just mentioned are excellent examples. The last of them is well planned and interesting throughout. The first movement is an excellent well-knit fugue, built upon a definite rhythmical subject against which two interesting and varied counter subjects are set. All these subjects have vigor and distinct individuality, and they are treated with a skill which is proof of Legrenzi's instinct for the instrumental style. The second movement is in the dignified rhythm of the sarabande, a dance form of the day; the third is a short adagio, leading to the last, which is lively and rapid, but rather loose in structure, recalling the old-style ricercar.

However, the sonatas of Legrenzi are often in more than four movements, and the credit of giving the *sonata da chiesa* its definite and lasting form belongs to Giovanni Battista Vitali, in whose collection of them, published in 1667, there is at last a regularity of plan in the number and arrangement of movements. The scheme is practically tri-partite. There are two fast movements in common time and in fugal style, one at the beginning and one at the end; and between them a movement generally in simple harmonic style and in triple time. There are also a few very slow measures either before or after the middle movement or at the beginning of the sonata as introduction to the first fast movement. The two fast movements are frequently in thematic relation to each other. Here we have the

form made ready for the later masters, of which we shall see them make use. Compared with the canzona of the first half of the century, Vitali's work shows a striking, sudden advance, not only in clearness of form, but in instrumental style. Not much is known of his life, but his works show that he was a player of brilliant skill, one of the first of the virtuoso violin composers.

Though the *sonata da chiesa* was descended directly from the old *canzona da sonar* and is therefore connected with the old music, it was greatly affected on the way by influences not remotely connected with the old polyphonic style. In the preceding pages it has been shown how the cultivation of the monodic style led to the cultivation of the technique of the human voice. Already in the works of Caccini, himself a great singer, there appear passages for the solo voice intended to show off its flexibility and technique. The influence of the monodic style made itself felt at once in violin music, and prompted the cultivation of a form of solo music which had little or nothing to do with the polyphonic canzona. No pieces have come down to us from the first ten years of the century which were written for the violin alone with accompaniment of Figured Bass for lute or harpsichord; but there are many written for two violins, which, in that they play seldom together but pursue a sort of dialogue in music, may be said to belong to the monodic style. The early pieces in this manner are under the influence of the new vocal style. Passages of any lively movement are written after the manner of Caccini's newly discovered vocal agilities.

But very soon the suitable violin style began to make its appearance, and we come across passages which could not have been sung, but which were suggested by the nature of the instrument for which they were intended. The early efforts were called sonatas. Like

the canzona, they were given special names, for example, Salvatore Rossi's sonata on the air of the Romanesca, and another on the air of Ruggiero, both of which are no more than a series of variations over two melodies both well known in their day. The practice of composing variations over a bass part which remained unchanged or was only very slightly adorned in a few cases and was called a ground bass or *basso ostinato,* was most common throughout the entire seventeenth century. No manner of securing an effect of form and symmetry could have been simpler, and no other form could have spurred composers more effectively toward the discovery of trills, turns, runs, and other ornaments within the power of instruments as a very means of saving themselves from the deadly monotony of a few phrases reiterated inexorably again and again in the bass. That the practice even of extemporizing variations—or divisions, as they were called—on a ground bass was much in vogue, as the improvisation of descant over the *cantus firmus* was in the early days of church polyphony, is witnessed by the famous work of the English musician, Christopher Sympson, entitled, the 'Division Violist,' which appeared in 1659, and which was intended to teach the art. Sympson says, 'A Ground, subject, or bass, call it what you please, is pricked down in two several papers, one for him who is to play the Ground upon an organ, harpsichord, or what other instrument may be apt for that purpose, the other for him that plays upon the viol, who, having the said Ground before his eyes as his theme or subject, plays such variety of descant or division in concordance thereto as his skill and present invention do then suggest unto him.'

The true instrumental monody makes its first appearance in 1617 in the works of Biagio Marini, the first famous violinist. In the first of his publications—a set of pieces called *Affetti musicali,* printed in 1617

in Venice, where Marini was then playing in the orchestra of St. Mark's—there are two pieces called *Sinfonie* for violin (or cornet) with Figured Bass, which may be said to represent the point where two distinct styles of instrumental music begin to diverge; one proceeding directly from these to pieces of widely developed solo music, the other developing through the canzona and works of that kind to modern orchestral music. This first work of Marini presents many innovations, the bowing is suggested by slurs, use is made of the tremolo (seven years before Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda,* in which it was long held to have appeared first); * and there are many passages of double stopping.

Another composer of the early times is Francesco Turini, writing trio-sonatas in the style of Salvatore Rossi, for two violins and a Figured Bass; and the works of Giovanni Battista Fontana (1641) show ever further development, not only in violin technique, but in the construction of music as well. Treading so carefully over new ground, the early composers seldom let themselves go in melodies of any long sweep but restrained themselves to short phrases, just as in writing canzonas for groups of instruments they held fast by short sections; but, in the works of Fontana, long, smooth phrases of well-balanced melody give proof of the rapidity with which the art was progressing and the confidence that was coming in the treatment of music for the violin. In the works of a contemporary, Tarquinio Merula, there is often even a lively humorous free swing. So the first half of the seventeenth century brought an understanding of the character of the violin as a solo instrument, and of its special treatment and of some of the possibilities of virtuosity that lay within it; and through the cultivation of the solo sonata—direct offspring of the early monodic style—

* See Riemann: *Op. cit.*, II², 100 Cf. Chap. IX, p. 245.

there grew up an art of composing long, smooth, expressive melodies for the violin which, exerting an influence upon the canzona of polyphonic birth, was to aid in freeing it from its restriction to short motives and in setting it upon its way toward the *sonata da chiesa* of Corelli and the symphonies of Beethoven.

IV

The importance of rhythm in instrumental music has already been pointed out. We have mentioned the part it played in the transformation of the heavy canzona into the *sonata da chiesa,* giving life and character to the themes, and structural regularity to the sections. We have now to consider the development of another cyclic form of music, the Suite, called in Italy the *sonata da camera,* which had its very being in rhythm. The orthodox suite at the end of the seventeenth century was a series of four short pieces, all of which were in the same key, each having the name of a dance, and differing from the others in its rhythm. The origin of the suite, therefore, is to be sought in the cultivation of dance music, which is essentially rhythmical music, and in the combination of several short dances in a sequence.

The remarkable English collections of music for the harpsichord or virginal already alluded to contain many dance tunes. In the treatment of them, however, as we have said, composers showed the influence of the polyphonic style to such an extent that they frequently disguised or even suppressed the characteristic rhythms as far as possible by cross accents and polyphonic intricacies. Yet that the English composers of that time, great men like William Byrd, John Bull, and Thomas Morley, were conscious of the contrasting characters of various dance rhythms, and of the pleas-

ant effect of playing a dance in one time after a dance in another, is shown by a passage in Morley's famous book, 'Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music' (1597), which describes the effect to be got by alternating a pavan and a galliard, 'the first of which was a kind of staid musick ordained for grave dancing, and the other a lighter and more stirring kind of dancing.'

But the practice of stringing dance tunes together antedates Morley's book by nearly a century, if not more. Among the first pieces of music ever printed were sets of dance tunes for the lute, which were printed by Petrucci in Venice in 1508. Some of these sets consisted of a pavan followed by other dances—*saltarello* and *piva*—which were thematically related to it; and throughout the sixteenth century many such embryo suites made their appearance. In the early lute music of the time the rhythmical element was quite obvious, clearly because the polyphonic style could not be reproduced upon the lute. Indeed music for the lute is the first instrumental music which presents a definite special instrumental style, and this because by its nature the instrument was quite unfitted for polyphony. The separate pieces in the early suites were often thematically related; they were, in fact, variation suites, built up upon the same theme presented in various rhythms. Toward the end of the century it became customary to print together many pieces of the same kind, so that one encounters sets of pavans, of gaillards, of *passamezzi*, of *courantes*, etc. Thereby the stringing together of dances of different types in the order of a suite disappears from printed music, though doubtless players of the lute and of the harpsichord chose single dances from the various collections and put and played them together according to their own taste.

In Italy the interest, newly aroused early in the seventeenth century, in toccatas and ricercari for the or-

gan, and in the canzona and solo sonata for other instruments, banished for a time interest in the combination of dance tunes; but German and English composers accepted the canzona very slowly, and all through the century gave themselves conspicuously to the combination and development of dance tunes, at first for an *ensemble* of instruments, and later for the harpsichord. They early broke away from the restrictions of church modes and built up their pieces over a clear harmonic foundation generally richer and more varied than the harmonies of the Italians. But in these early suites, too, there is the same rhythmical hesitation which has been found characteristic of all early instrumental music, and the metrical structure of the various dances is often irregular and unbalanced, so strong were the old polyphonic traditions and the mistrust of liveliness.

Of the old dance tunes two are almost invariably present in the suite up to the middle of the century, the pavan and the galliard. The pavan was a broad, stately kind of music in common time, and was generally divided into three sections, of which the first was in simple harmonic style, and the second and third more contrapuntal. The galliard, on the other hand, was in triple time, and was always set in simple harmonic style. Here is the same principle of construction as that upon which the instrumental canzonas were built—pieces of polyphonic style contrasted with those of a simpler kind.

At what time the pavan and the galliard gave way to the *allemande* and *courante,* which are the nucleus of the orthodox suite, has yet to be determined, but at the end of the century the suites of the great German and English writers present uniformly four standard movements, of which the arrangement is allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. The origin of the allemande is unknown. It was always in common time

and was of stately though not slow movement. Of the courantes there were two distinct types, one called French and the other Italian, both in triple time and both rapid, but the former complex and full of cross accents and the latter simple and gay. The sarabande was of Spanish or Moorish origin and was in slow triple time with the rhythmical peculiarity of a dwelling or accent upon the second beat of the measure. It differed from the other movements in that it was invariably in harmonic style; and its rich though simple chords and the quiet dignity of its movements have expressed many of the deepest and most emotional thoughts of the great masters, Purcell, Handel, and Bach. The gigue was lively and usually in six-eight time. It was the only dance of British origin to find a central place in the suite, which is remarkable in view of the fact that the English masters were among the first to work with the suite form. Between the sarabande and the gigue it was customary to insert one or more extra dances, of which those most frequently met with are the *minuet, gavotte, bourrée,* etc. At the beginning of the suite was often a prelude in the form of the early canzona, and called 'sonata' or 'symphony.'

Each movement was divided into two nearly equal parts, and each of these parts was repeated. The first began in the tonic key and modulated to the dominant; the second began in the dominant and modulated back to the tonic. Thus there was an harmonic basis which in these movements, as in the movements of the perfected *sonata da chiesa* of the Italians, was an essential element of the design. The division of the definite movements, which was from the beginning one of the features of the suite, probably had some influence upon the Italian composers and led them to the step of cutting the canzona, too, into definite movements.

All through the century composers in England and in Germany were experimenting with these combina-

tions of dance tunes for groups of instruments. Among the English experimenters should be mentioned MatthewLocke with his collection of suites for strings called 'The Little Consort of Three Parts' (1656), each of which contains a pavan, an ayre, a 'corant,' and a sarabande; and Benjamin Rogers, one of the most famous composers of his day. Among the Germans, Johann Jacob Löwen with his *Sinphonien* (1658), which are sets of dance tunes, and Dietrich Becker with 'Musical Spring Fruit' (1658), among which is a suite made up in the conventional order of allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. One cannot but be astonished to find how closely the suite of the northern masters and the canzona of the Italians kept pace with one another. As proof one has only to note that Becker's work with its orthodox suite is but a year later than Vitali's first *sonata da chiesa.*

Thus by the beginning of the last quarter of the century musicians had developed an instrument style for groups of string instruments and for the organ; they had devised fitting forms independent of words for their musical ideas, they had studied melody and acquired the art of handling it, and they had admitted the stir of rhythm into their most serious work, thereby giving it an animation which would have been summarily condemned a century before. There still lacked men of the highest order of genius to take up the work thus prepared for them.

V

One style of instrumental music is still to be discussed, namely, that for the harpsichord. This instrument had been brought to a high state of perfection by the family of Ruckers in Antwerp about the turn of the sixteenth century. It was known by various names

—clavecin in France, harpsichord in England, clavicembalo in Italy, and was made in various forms and sizes. Though a keyboard instrument, it can hardly be considered an ancestor of the piano, for the tones of it were caused by the plucking of the strings, by jacks attached to levers operated by the keys and not by the pressing or striking of them. Such variety of tone shading as could be got from it was chiefly through the working of stops, which brought a new series of strings into play, or of pedals, which dampened the strings; and the larger harpsichords were furnished with two or more manuals which operated upon separate sets of strings.

The extraordinary output of music for the virginals in England just before the beginning and during the first few years of the century gave way to interest in 'Fancies,' and later in suites for strings, and the Germans were absorbed in music for the organ or for an ensemble of strings. The Italians were given almost wholly to the cultivation of music for the violin. To the French must be given the credit of having developed the art of the harpsichord to a high state of excellence and beauty during the course of the first half of the century. The Germans were content to publish some pieces for the 'harpsichord *or* organ,' the Italians likewise; the French were the first to realize the fundamental differences between the two instruments. A great deal is due to the influence of the famous French lutenists of the mid-century, among whom Denys Gaultier deserves first mention. His collection of pieces called *La rhétorique des dieux* is one of the most charming records of music in Europe during the seventeenth century. While composers for organ, for groups of string instruments, and even for the voice, were still struggling with problems of style and form, these little pieces made their appearance, in which there is no trace of experiment nor hesitation, but com-

plete mastery of a style both delicate and in every way suitable. The lute still held its place as the most generally used of all instruments during the greater part of the century, not only as accompaniment to voices and as foundation for groups of instruments, but as a solo instrument. Even works by Corelli at the very end of the century are written over a Figured Bass, which may be played either by harpsichord or lute. That it at last gave way to the harpsichord is probably owing to the great difficulty of playing it. After the time of Gaultier, special cultivation of it rapidly waned, but Gaultier had lasting influence upon subsequent composers for the harpsichord, both in France and Germany. *La rhétorique des dieux* contains many sets of little pieces, most of which conform to the style of dance pieces then cultivated, all bearing fanciful names such as *Phæton foudroyé, Diana, Ulysses, Mars superbe, Juno, ou La jalouse, La coquette virtuose,* etc. They are light and graceful and quite free of the heaviness of the polyphonic style.

The first of the great French composers for the harpsichord was Jacques Champion Chambonnières, brilliant son of a family of musicians. His two books of pieces published in 1670 contain several sets of dances which are arranged in the order already established as orthodox; allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. The place of the allemande is sometimes taken by two pavans, several of the courantes are followed by doubles, and sometimes a minuet or a galliard takes the place of the gigue. The style is obviously influenced by Gaultier's music for the lute, and is marked by perfect ease and an elegant clearness and grace. And like Gaultier's pieces, many of them have dainty, fanciful names, such as *Iris la toute belle, L'entretien des dieux, Jeunes zéphirs,* etc. Already in the preface to these sets of pieces we come across directions for playing those little ornaments which were to become

one of the most characteristic features of music for the harpsichord in the next century, and the subject of many a treatise.

In Germany harpsichord music was set free from organ music by Froberger, whose works for the organ we have already mentioned. Though his harpsichord pieces first appeared in print in 1693 and 1696, several manuscripts bear the date of 1649; and one upon the death of Ferdinand IV must belong near 1654. Froberger must have seen something of Gaultier and Chambonnières while he was in Paris, but the fact that none of his pieces bore names after the fashion of the French composers shows that he did not wish to be considered an imitator of them, and indeed his style is still rather heavy and compact and more akin to the early English style than to the light transparent style of the French.

VI

The history of opera during the seventeenth century is brilliantly fascinating because it reflects so much the social life of those times; yet the contribution of opera composers to the art of music is not great. We have seen in a previous chapter what Monteverdi accomplished for opera; that he had a grasp and comprehension of those principles of opera upon which Gluck and Wagner later based their music dramas; that his music, though often rashly experimental and crude, on the other hand was often genuinely dramatic and strong in emotional feeling. But even before his death composers of opera had turned their backs upon the road toward which Monteverdi had pointed, and were well started on their way toward an opera in which all dramatic power, all genuine feeling was to be stifled in a mass of formal vocalism and scenic display. Upon opera more than upon any other form of music the in-

fluence of fashion and public taste made itself felt. The rush of opera into a state of utter falseness was indeed headlong. Let us quote from Dr. Burney's history. After stating that during the years between 1662 and 1680 there were nearly a hundred different operas performed in Venice alone, and giving the names of many composers now quite forgotten, he says: 'During this period it seldom happens indeed that the names of poets, composers, or singers are recorded in printed copies of these dramas, though that of the machinist is never omitted; and much greater care seems to have been taken to amuse the eye than the ears or the intellect of those who attended these spectacles.' He gives a list of the paraphernalia used in the performance of an opera on the subject of *Berenice* at Padua in 1680. The list includes choruses of one hundred virgins, one hundred soldiers, one hundred horsemen in iron armor, forty cornets of horse, six trumpeters on horse-back, six drummers, six ensigns, six trombones, six flutes, six minstrels playing on Turkish instruments, six others on octave flutes, six pages, three sergeants, six cymballists, twelve huntsmen, twelve grooms, six coachmen for the triumph, six others for the procession, two lions led by two Turks, two elephants by two others, Berenice's triumphal car drawn by four horses, six other cars with prisoners and spoils drawn by twelve horses, and six coaches for the procession. Among the scenes in the first act was a vast plain with two triumphal arches, another with pavillions and tents, a square prepared for the entrance of triumph; in act two, Berenice's royal apartments; in act three, a royal dressing-room, completely furnished, stables with one hundred live horses, and besides representations of every species of chase, as of wild boar, stag, deer, and bears. Obviously in such a spectacle true dramatic art and true musicianship found little place. Yet some of the opera composers of the century

should not pass unnoticed even in a general history of music. Their operas, it is true, are now no longer heard, are indeed practically forgotten, but their efforts invented new vocal forms which have held a prominent place in the art of music, not only in opera.

Opera may be said to have originated in Florence, but it was soon transplanted from the city of its birth, and after the year 1600 the historian finds little of importance in Florentine opera to claim his attention. In 1608 Marco da Gagliano made another musical setting of Rinuccini's *Dafne,* which had been set by Peri into the first opera. It may be remarked that Peri generously placed Gagliano above himself. Gagliano wrote a preface to his *Dafne* in which he gave as his definition of opera, 'a true entertainment for princes, more pleasing than any other, for it unites in itself all the finest pleasures, invention, the arrangement of a subject, ideas, style, sweetness of rhyme, the art of music, concord of voices and instruments, refinement and delicacy of song, graceful dances and movements; and it may be said that painting also plays a great part in the perspective and the costumes; so much so that not only the intelligence but all the noblest feelings are charmed by the most pleasing arts which have been invented by the genius of man.' This is a high ideal of opera, not unworthy to stand beside Wagner's; but the spirit of the age cared little enough about charming the intelligence, and the next opera of importance in Florence, *Ruggiero,* written by Francesca Caccini, daughter of Giulio Caccini, is little more than a spectacle. Gagliano's *Flora* (1624) closes the Florentine period.

In Rome the opera was for many years influenced by the oratorio, that is to say, the texts chosen were oftenest either spiritual or allegorical, following the style of Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione,* which has already been treated in the previous chapter. Opera and oratorio were hardly different in form. The influence

of the church was strong and decidedly conservative. The most important opera composers in Rome, Stefano Landi and Agazzari, were both in the service of the church, and were, as a matter of fact, primarily church composers. Moreover, there was no public opera in Rome until after the middle of the century. Performances were given under the patronage and at the palaces of cardinals, among them Corsini, Colonna, Rospigliosi, and Barberini. Landi's two operas, *Orfeo* (1619), and *San Alessio* (1634), are both made up of comic and tragic elements. In *Orfeo* there is a Lethe drinking song for Charon, one of the first comedy scenes in opera, and in *San Alessio,* which deals with a story of Christ, there are buffoons. These comedy scenes seem to show a reaction against the ecclesiastical influence. Among the musicians in the service of Cardinal Barberini was Luigi Rossi, one of the most admired and best beloved musicians of his day. He was summoned to Paris by Mazarin in 1646 with twenty singers, among them eight male soprani, and in Paris wrote his most famous opera, 'The Marriage of Orpheus and Eurydice.' Upon his return to Rome he wrote another opera, *Il palagio d'Atlante,* and an oratorio, 'Joseph.' In general it may be said that the influence of the church was too strong for opera at Rome, and the so-called Roman school of the seventeenth century has its place only in the development of the *cantata* and the oratorio.

Venice was the centre of operatic music during the greater part of the century. Thither, as we have seen, Monteverdi had been called in 1613 as choirmaster at St. Mark's, and there he wrote *Tancredi,* 'The Return of Ulysses,' and *L'incoronazione di Poppea,* all of which, by the color of their orchestration, their genuine dramatic feeling, and their remarkable strength of harmony, left a standard for opera which was nowhere equalled throughout the century. The first opera house

in Europe was built in Venice in 1637. Others quickly followed in the same city. Thus here the opera ceased to be a private amusement for the rich nobility and became a public diversion; and composers were consequently forced to take at once into consideration the desires and the taste of the public. No longer free under a rich patronage to experiment, they were obliged to write works for which a popular success might be expected. Furthermore, the financial managers of the opera were by no means willing to pay high salaries and secure the services of the best musicians for the orchestra. Composers could count upon but little skill in the playing of their accompaniments, and, had they been inclined to write elaborately for the orchestra, would have been deterred from so doing by the knowledge that their music would have been mishandled. Thereupon it is hardly surprising that composers quickly lost interest in a detailed workmanship which would have passed unnoticed by the careless ears of the age, that they strove for breadth of effect, at the sacrifice of artistic perfection, that they neglected their accompaniments and the resources of the orchestra and centred their attention wholly upon the voice parts, upon melody for which alone the public had interest. The standards of Monteverdi were forgotten or ignored even before his death. His greatest pupil and his successor, Francesco Cabetti-Bruni, called Cavalli (1599-1676), never lost entirely what he learned from his master. In his operas, of which 'Jason' (1649), 'Serse' (1660), and *Ercole amante* (1662) are most often cited, and were in his own day the most famous, the dramatic element never wholly disappears. But, whereas Monteverdi intensified the plays which he set to music by sudden, often harsh, effects, Cavalli tended always toward smoothness. Monteverdi's style is pointed and concentrated, full of fire, Cavalli's flowing and diluted. It was to his interest to make the most

of dramatic scenes, to expand them to proportions which could not fail to claim the attention of his audiences. Therefore it happens that the recitative, which was the usual medium of musical expression in the early operas, was at places in his opera broadened into more or less sustained melody. The dramatic value of a situation was no longer tersely emphasized by a sharp interval in the voice part or a few harsh chords in the accompaniment, but was extended throughout a long passage tending to become more and more lyrical. In this fashion the *aria* was prefigured in the operas of Cavalli, and so it grew and was perfected and became the characteristic mark of the Italian opera.

The form became stereotyped. There was usually an orchestral introduction, anticipating the melody. This was followed by the first section of the aria, usually broad, flowing melody within the limits of the tonic key. After this came an orchestral *ritornel,* and then the second section of the aria, usually in a more broken and sometimes more agitated style, and in a contrasting key. This section was followed by another orchestral ritornel and the return of the first section complete. It became the custom to write the words *da capo* at the end of the second section, directing the singer to return to the beginning and start over again, singing to a sign placed at the end of the first section. The form is, of course, stiff, but it is not by any means essentially ugly. The recapitulation of the first section gives a sense of balance and proportion to the song as a whole, which is necessary in any work of art. This very balance, however, is in direct opposition to dramatic effect. The action of a drama must move forward. To return in scenes of great feeling to a point already passed and repeat what has already once been sung checks all action and brings the play to a standstill. Yet in the course of the century arias came to occupy the predominant part in opera. Before the

end of the century they were classified into various kinds, and a composer was not only forced to incorporate a certain number of each kind into his opera, but to allot to each singer his or her proper share of them. The old *dramma per musica* became a thing of the past, the new opera merely a series of songs arbitrarily joined by a few measures of indifferent accompanied or unaccompanied recitative.

As we have said, signs of this development are already apparent in the operas of Cavalli, pupil of Monteverdi. Cavalli achieved immense popular success. His fame spread over Europe. He was summoned to France in 1660 and again in 1662 and required to furnish operas for the court of Louis XIV. Lully, whose work we shall consider in the next chapter, was already in control of music at the court, and was commissioned to add ballet music to the operas of Cavalli to season them to the French taste; and in this way had the chance to study Cavalli's music and to appropriate from it all that was worth continuing. Through Cavalli the influence of Monteverdi therefore passed into France.

It is not in melody alone that Cavalli's works reflect the spirit of his time. The orchestral parts are carelessly treated. There are instrumental passages for which no special instruments are even designated. There is the same love of show and spectacle which was already evident in the works of England and the ballets of France and in the late Florentine opera. Elaborate scenes and complicated stage machines are constantly employed. There are pompous allegorical prologues and final ballets, and scenes of buffoonery mingled with the classic theme.

All this is far more striking in the works of a later famous composer of the Venetian school, Marc' Antonio Cesti (1620-1669). Cesti's most famous operas were *La Dori* (1663) and *Il pomo d'oro* (1667). The

latter was written after Cesti had gone to Vienna for the marriage of Leopold I and Margareta of Spain. It was produced with the most extravagant splendor. The prologue was sung by characters representing Spain, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, and even America. There were five acts and sixty-seven scenes. The voice parts are smooth and melodious, but the orchestra is carelessly handled. Giovanni Legrenzi (1625-1690) alone stands conspicuous among the Venetian composers for any attention to orchestral effects. Most of his operas were written between 1675 and 1684 while he was at the head of one of the Venetian conservatories and second choirmaster at St. Mark's, and nearly all of them were produced in Venice. He seems to have presided over a sort of academy which met at his house. Among his pupils the most famous in the next generation were Lotti, Caldara, and Galuppi.

The list of composers who wrote for the opera houses in Venice is long. Their fertility was enormous. The public demanded novelty and only a few operas won a permanent place in its favor. The opera season was carnival time, during the weeks between Epiphany and Lent, though there were often short seasons in the fall and in the late spring. All operas must end happily, and the comic element was never absent. For the greater part of the century the Venetian opera was the favorite of all Europe. After 1670, however, opera began to flourish in Naples, and by the beginning of the next century the Neapolitan opera was supreme. Here in Naples the victory of the singers was complete. Composers were at their mercy and the public fawned upon them. Bearing in mind that the opera began with the attempts of a few briliant young Florentines to restore the Greek drama, in which, so far as we know, recitative and chorus were the chief musical adjuncts, we cannot but be amazed to note the state to which it had come by the end of the century. The

chorus had been abandoned except for massed effects at the end of the acts, recitative had been cut down as much as possible, and the aria was supreme. Even the arias were distorted or inflated with technical devices to show off the skill of the singers. Of dramatic feeling there was none and of genuine music scarcely a note that has survived the test of time. Practically all of the more than seven hundred operas written between 1607 and 1700 have sunk into oblivion. Many have even perished utterly. As Burney says, often enough the name of the composer of an opera was unmentioned. A century of endeavor might well be reckoned as futilely spent, but that it left a model of smooth recitative, of eminently suitable vocal style and the standard of the perfected aria.

But such an opera as this was what the public wanted, not only in Italy, but in Germany, France, and England as well. Except for the opera in Hamburg there was no attempt at a national opera in Germany during the century. For the most part composers, librettists, and singers were Italian. Heinrich Schütz has the fame of having written the first German opera. The music was burned in 1760. The text was the oft-set *Dafne* of Rinuccini, translated into German. Remembering that Schütz had received his education in Venice between 1609 and 1612, at a time when the new style was in the air, we may surmise that his music was in the Italian style of the first period of opera, full of dramatic feeling. *Daphne* was performed in 1627 at the castle of Hartenfels near Torgau in Saxony for the marriage of Princess Sophie of Saxony and George II of Hesse-Darmstadt. Opera was introduced in Munich in 1657 by Kaspar Kerll, writing to Italian texts. In Dresden opera was from the start (1662) Italian. There was no opera in Berlin before 1700.

The French received the Italians coldly at first, but their opera, or rather the ballet from which their opera

developed, depended for effect largely upon display. In England the theatres were closed by the Puritans between 1642 and 1660, and there was no opera before Purcell's 'Dido and Æneas' (1688-1690). But both before and after the commonwealth a form of dramatic entertainment called the 'masque' was in great favor and attracted the attention of a number of composers. The masque resembled the French ballet, which seems to have come from the same source; but it far excelled its French counterpart in literary workmanship and skill. Like the French ballet, however, it was wholly a private amusement. People of rank and fashion took part in it, usually disguised. It was generally based on a mythological story and was made up of dialogue, songs, and dancing, and was always extravagantly staged. Among the composers who set music to various masques throughout the century should be mentioned Thomas Campion (d. 1620), Nicholas Lanier (d. 1666), who is said to have introduced recitative into England; the brothers William and Henry Lawes, the latter of whom set Milton's 'Comus' to music in 1634; Matthew Locke (d. 1677); and Pelham Humphrey (d. 1674). The masque can hardly be said to have developed into opera. The one very great composer England produced during the century, Henry Purcell, was influenced by it, but his one opera 'Dido and Æneas' is almost the only English opera, and immediately after his death Italian opera flooded London to the exclusion of any other that might have grown out of the masque.

Meanwhile the oratorio, which sprang into life together with the opera, had been generally neglected. The first real oratorio, Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo,* given in Rome in 1600, did not differ, except in subject matter, from an opera. The personages in the allegory were all acted; there were scenery and costumes. The same is true of the ora-

torios of Steffano Landi and Liugi Rossi. The form began to differ from the form of the opera only with the works of Giacomo Carissimi, one of the most famous composers of the century. He was born near Rome about 1604, was probably trained in Rome, and held the post of choirmaster at S. Apollinari in Rome from 1628 until his death in 1674. Trained in Rome and living most of his life there, Carissimi was under the conservative influence of the church and all his music shows a musicianship far above that of any of his contemporaries, and more allied to the lofty perfection of the old polyphonic style. On the other hand, he did not fail to avail himself of the results of the new movement. Though in his masses he is a master of smooth part writing, not unworthy to stand beside Palestrina, in the choruses of his oratorios, when there is agitated or dramatic feeling to be expressed, he uses with equal ease a style broken and pointed with rhythm, which is wholly in keeping with the dramatic ideals of Monteverdi and none the less careful and artistic. In this certain 'high seriousness' of his work Carissimi is in sharp contrast with most of the composers of his age, who, carried high on the wave of the reactionary movement, often refused to subject themselves to the discipline of any genuine musical training and composed merely in a sketchy, unfinished way. All Carissimi's work is marked by great finish. He was one of the few composers of the century who worked seriously to improve the new recitative style and his influence in this regard was far-reaching. Then, too, his treatment of orchestral accompaniments was anything but vague and indefinite. He was the first to differentiate the oratorio from the opera. In all his oratorios, of which 'Jephtha' and 'Jonah' are the most famous, the story is sung in recitative by a 'Narrator.' There is no action, nor scenery nor costumes, and the chorus is given a far more important

part in the scheme than it ever found in opera. It was upon the foundation laid by Carissimi that Händel, nearly a century later, built up his own great oratorio.

Carissimi was, moreover, the first to perfect a form of music known as the *cantata,* consisting of recitative and arias for solo voice with figured bass accompaniment, a sort of vocal chamber music which was also suitable for use in the church. The form was further developed by Alessandro Scarlatti, and later by Händel.

In Germany the growths of both the oratorio and the cantata were greatly influenced by the more serious religious temper of the people and by the intimate personal religious sentiment which was the outcome of the Reformation. Naturally, the church music of the German composers was affected by the Italian schools, notably that of Venice, and by the general movement toward solo and concert style and the opera. But the chorales which, we have already seen, led to a form of organ music distinctively German colored all German Protestant religious music with a spirit that was completely wanting in Italian music of the same age. The chorale was incorporated into oratorios and into cantatas. The congregation was given a voice, shared in the musical expression of most profound and yet most intimate devotional feeling. By far the greatest of German composers of this time was Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), whose *Dafne* has already been mentioned. Most of his works were sacred. In the oratorio style belong the 'Resurrection' (1623), the 'Seven Words' (1645) and four settings of the story of the Passion, settings of the Psalms (1619) and the *Symphoniæ sacræ* (1629-1650). All these works, though full of dramatic feeling, are intensely religious, and foreshadow the great cantatas and the Passion of Johann Sebastian Bach, both in their richness of harmony and in their genuineness of feeling.

L. H.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The musicians of the century—Henry Purcell and music in England—Italy: Alessandro Scarlatti; Arcangelo Corelli; Domenico Scarlatti—The beginnings of French opera: the *Ballet-comique de la reine;* Cambert and Perrin—Jean Baptiste Lully—Couperin and Rameau—Music in Germany: Keiser, Mattheson, and the Hamburg opera; precursors of Bach.

THREE-QUARTERS of the seventeenth century produced hardly more than experimental music. The enthusiasm of the Italians found on every hand new ways for the development of music and they were in every branch the innovators and the bold discoverers. In every country of Europe their influence was felt, their guidance followed. They were the models for the time. And, at the end of the century, what they had sown bore fruit, both in their own country and in England, Holland, Germany, and France. At the end of the century lasting achievement takes the place of experiment, there are a dozen composers in every branch of music who no longer speak with hesitation but with certainty, whose music is well built and clear and free in style. Their activities pass well into the next century, but they are firmly rooted in the seventeenth, and their work should be regarded as the harvest of that time of sowing. Growing among them were the greatest of all composers, John Sebastian Bach, and his great compeer Georg Friederich Händel.

I

England alone produced a truly great composer whose lifetime fell within the century, Henry Purcell.

F. Closterman pinx.
R. White sculp.
Henricus Purcell.
Etat Suæ 37. 95

The date of his birth has not been exactly determined. He died on the 21st of November, 1695, at the age of only thirty-seven years. As a boy he sang in the choir of the Chapel Royal, and when his voice broke he was still retained as a supernumerary. In 1680 he succeeded Dr. John Blow as organist of Westminster Abbey and held the post until his death. He began to compose when very young and in his brief life set his stamp upon almost every form of music then known, though he found the first expression of his remarkable genius in music for the stage and incidental music for plays. In this branch his opera 'Dido and Æneas' (1689-1691) maintains the highest excellence. What is most striking in it, and, indeed, is most striking in all Purcell's music, is the genuineness of feeling. He gave his music lasting life. There is little trace of empty formalism or of arid conventionalism which stifled the music of so many opera composers of his day. Its freshness is in no way stale to-day. His use of harmony as a means of emotional expression is far ahead of any of his contemporaries, and he had a gift of spontaneous melody which has never been excelled by any other save perhaps Schubert. The death song of Dido in the opera just mentioned is nearly as startling in relation to the time in which it was written as Monteverdi's 'Lament of Ariadne.' A few measures of most expressive recitative lead to the song, which, characteristically English, is indeed a song and not the stiff aria of the day. It is a striking example of Purcell's skill in working over a ground bass, in this case a descending chromatic phrase full of melancholy and pathos. 'Dido and Æneas' is the only English opera in the strict sense of the word. Unhappily the rich promise of a national school of English opera which it contains was never fulfilled. Almost immediatey after the death of Pur-

cell Italian opera invaded London and in 1711 was firmly established there by Händel.

Purcell wrote a great deal of music for the theatre, but for the most part in the form of songs and instrumental dances. Among the plays for which he wrote music should be mentioned Dryden's 'King Arthur' and 'The Indian Queen'; 'Diocletian,' 'The Fairy Queen,' and the 'Tempest.' His most important instrumental works are a set of twelve sonatas for two violins, bass and figured bass for harpsichord, published in 1683, and another similar set of ten published after his death by his widow, and eight suites for harpsichord. All these are in keeping with the general style of the time. The sonatas, the first set of which appeared in the same year as Corelli's opus 1, are marked by seriousness which tends toward heaviness in comparison with Corelli's work. They are less spontaneous than his vocal music, but they are of high artistic merit. The works for harpsichord are touched by the charm of English tunefulness and are no less dainty for being conspicuously simple in comparison with the more elaborate work of the French writers. The greatest part of Purcell's work must remain in isolated monument of great genius, for it had little influence upon the general course of music in his day. However, his anthems and semi-sacred odes hold an important historical position, inasmuch as they contain magnificent choruses, from a study of which Händel obviously and greatly profited. Purcell was second to none of his contemporaries in technical skill. He stood above them in musical power, in the fullness and virility of his ideas, in genuineness and simplicity, in those qualities which elevate genius above technical mastery and agreeable ease. His music rings clear and true.

II

In Italy itself, three men stand out most prominently, Alessandro Scarlatti, his son Domenico, and Arcangelo Corelli. Alessandro Scarlatti is one of the most brilliant figures of the period. Unhappily it is but another proof of the futility of opera music of that time that so little of his work has survived. His productiveness is nothing short of prodigious. He wrote at least 114 operas and, besides these, 500 cantatas, both for solo voice and for two voices, church music and oratorios. Born in Sicily and living at two periods in his life at Naples for several years, he was long held to have added a new flavor to Italian opera and to have founded a school of opera in Naples distinct in character from other Italian opera. But, except for the unusual charm of his personal genius and a higher artistic instinct than that with which most of his contemporaries were endowed, his music hardly differs from theirs. Certainly he is one of the most important figures in the history of music, in that he rounded Italian opera into smooth, polished shape and left it clearly defined as a model for all opera composers during the course of the next century. He was born in Sicily in 1659; the exact place is not known, but his family was of Tuscan origin. His youth was spent in Rome, where serious traditions of music still lingered; and there, under what teachers no one knows, he acquired a thoroughly solid foundation and that light, sure grasp of technique which shows in his music in striking contrast to the careless work of many a contemporary then famous. From 1684 to 1702 he was in Naples, occupied principally in composing operas for production at the royal palace or at the theatre of San Bartolomeo. The Neapolitan taste was frivolous and, there can be little doubt, was harmful to the composer,

by nature inclined rather to comply with it than to defy it. Yet by 1702 Scarlatti could stand it no longer, and for nine years lived in various of the big Italian cities, always writing operas, successful and highly honored. He returned to Naples in 1713. A few years later the Neapolitans lost interest in his music and he went again to Rome. In 1723 he was back again in Naples, quite out of favor with the public, apparently forgotten by his own generation; and here he died on the 24th of October, 1725. During the last year of his life Johann Adolf Hasse, destined to universal popularity as a composer of operas in the Italian style, was his pupil.

The great number of *da capo* arias in Scarlatti's works gave rise to a belief prevalent for many years that he was the inventor of this form, which is mainly responsible for the degeneration of Italian opera into the state of meaningless vapidity in which it is found during the following century; but the growth of the form and its use can be traced in the works of his predecessors. He gave to the form, however, its perfect outline, and, though none of his arias can be said to touch any emotional depth, they are models of a perfect vocal style never since excelled, and even today are pleasing by the faultlessness of their structure and the elegant smoothness of their flow. Scarlatti established this conventional form to the exclusion of all others. How strongly it prevents dramatic action has already been shown in a previous chapter; but Scarlatti in establishing it so firmly in Italian opera was but complying with the demands of audiences of his time, and should be less blamed for his acquiescence to popular taste than praised for the beauty with which he was able to clothe it. He bequeaths to his followers thereby one of the few valuable accomplishments of Italian opera composers of the seven-

teenth century, a form of music wonderfully adapted to show off the beauties of the human voice.

Moreover, he may be said to have invented the accompanied recitative. At any rate his opera *Olimpia vendicata* (1686) gives us the earliest known examples of it, and, though he used it seldom, that he thought to use it at all is indicative of his genius, which, not bold enough to explore the realm of effects in the face of a frivolous public, might, under more favorable circumstances, have broken free of the conventions closing tighter and tighter about Italian opera. With his operas appear the first approximately definite models of the Italian overture. These overtures when played with the operas to which they were preludes were called *sinfonie,* but when played in concert apart from the operas were called overtures. They consisted of three distinct parts or movements—the first a solid allegro, the second a slow expressive movement, and the last light and lively. How much the form had influence upon the development of the symphony is shown by the fact that several of Haydn's early symphonies were published under the name of overtures.

Other works even nearer general oblivion than Scarlatti's operas are his secular cantatas. These are less influenced by the demands of the public, and are in general representative of his ideals. Not only are the recitative and the arias in smooth, flawless style, but the accompaniments, frequently enriched by instrumental parts added to the figured bass, are full of expressive harmony. That they are less remembered than the operas is due to the fact that the form ceased to be cultivated after his death. Händel's cantatas, like his operas, show the influence of Scarlatti; but Händel's cantatas, too, are forgotten.

In that he left in his operas a model of perfect form for that style of opera which was popular and successful during the next century, his influence was

strongly felt, and he was imitated by countless composers who, unhappily, fell far short of his musicianship. Hasse was actually his pupil, Händel his follower; they alone were worthy of their predecessor. His figure is a striking one in the history of music, both by itself and in relation to the time which cramped and confined it.

His friend Arcangelo Corelli won a lasting fame as the first great violinist and composer of music for the violin. He was born at Fusignano in Italy in February, 1653. During his early life, about which little is known, he appears to have travelled in Germany and France, but before 1685 he had settled in Rome, where, save for a few journeys, he remained till the end of his life in January, 1713. In his lifetime he lacked neither friends nor appreciation. His works achieved immediate popularity in all the countries of Europe. Only in Naples, whither he went in 1708, did he fail to win success. Stories of his meetings with Scarlatti and with Händel show him to have been a man of gentle, kindly nature, unspoiled by the homage done him by royalty and by the first people in Italy. His position in the history of music is of twofold importance; for not only was he a great player who laid a firm foundation for the future development of violin technique, but a composer who summed up in his works what had been done in music for an ensemble of string instruments, and left models of genuine musical worth which were to serve composers of instrumental music until the full development of the symphony.

His works were published in six sets or *opera,* still justly famous. Sets one and three consist of twelve *sonate da chiesa;* two and four, of twelve *sonate da camera.* The fifth contains twelve solo sonatas for violin with bass and figured bass; and the sixth is made up of *concerti grossi* for three solo instruments, called the *concertino,* and an accompaniment for two violins,

viola, violoncello, and figured bass, called the *tutti.* The *sonate da chiesa* and the *sonate da camera* differ from each other more in name than in content. The *sonate da chiesa* or church sonatas are, as might be expected, of rather serious character, the chamber sonatas are more frankly rhythmical; and, whereas the movements of the former are without titles and stand as absolute music, those of the latter frequently bear the names of the dance forms from which we have seen the *sonata da camera* developed. But the two kinds are closely related. The form in which all are cast is fundamentally tripartite, with an introductory movement. The introduction is in a slow, solid style, after the manner of the old pavan. The first movement proper is in the dignified contrapuntal style of the allemande, the second in the style of the sarabande —slow and expressive—and the last is lively and usually in the rhythm of the gigue. They are all written for three instruments, with figured bass for organ, harpsichord or lute. What is most striking about them, apart from their excellent fitness for the instruments for which they were written, is the compactness of form, the neat balance and proportion toward which composers had been toiling during the century. Here at last is mature instrumental music, music that can stand alone, that is firm and articulate. In the church sonatas, it is true, he sometimes chokes the life of the music in the contrapuntal web which was still in his day the high serious ideal of musicians, but the chamber sonatas are astonishingly free from it. Even more striking is the fine mastery of form and style shown in the twelve solo sonatas. These, too, are of the two kinds, church sonatas and chamber sonatas. In them there is no trace of uncertainty nor of insecure experiment. Master of the violin as he was, his treatment of the solo passages and his ornamentation have lost none of their beauty to our ears more than two

hundred years after he wrote them. There is no trace of the slow-moving vocal style which had so long hampered his predecessors; all is purely instrumental. In him a great victory was won and a branch of music established for all time. It is noteworthy, too, that he was guided by a good taste which restrained him from writing passages merely for technical display. The feverish desire to astonish audiences, evident in the works of his famous contemporary, Vivaldi, is nowhere evident in his own; and, though they may seem to lack fire on this account, they are the more musical for being the less brilliant. His works still have their place in the repertories of great violinists. What must strike the listener is the just proportion between form and content, giving them a serene dignity; for, as the form is simple, so is the emotion equable and cool, and there is no empty pretentiousness, on the one hand, nor inadequacy of means, on the other.

The *concerti grossi* present a relatively new form. The first eight are built upon the same plan as the *sonate da chiesa;* the last four contain dance movements in the style of the *sonate da camera.* In the eighth is the famous 'Pastorale.' The term is used as early as 1698 (Lorenzo Gregori: *Concerti grossi,* op. 2) to signify a composition for two or three solo instruments with more or less elaborate orchestral accompaniment or background. The solo instruments repeat what the orchestra plays, with some elaboration and fine shading. Out of the *concerti grossi* Torelli and Vivaldi developed the solo concerto, limiting the concertino to one single violin. In this new form the solo passages present new material independent of what the *tutti* has announced, and are distinct episodes filled with brilliant pyrotechnics.

Corelli and Scarlatti must both be given an important place in the history of music. Of the two men, Scarlatti had the greater genius, but he turned it to

ARCHANGELO CORELLI.

use in a form of music which could not develop beyond where he left it, which was radically false and destined to oblivion. Corelli, on the other hand, composing far less, gave violin music the secure foundation upon which all later musicians have built, and left examples of simple instrumental music which still hold their place by force of their calm, genuine feeling. It is strange to think of Corelli on tour in Naples some two hundred years ago, sitting nervous and confused at the head of Scarlatti's orchestra, stupidly making mistakes; and of Scarlatti, then at the pinnacle of fame, polite and kind.

Alessandro Scarlatti's son, Domenico, was born in Naples in 1685, during the second year of his father's stay there. With whom he studied is unknown, but in his youth he was both in Naples and Rome. His first work was in Naples. In 1705 his father sent him to Venice with the great singer Nicolino, and gave him a letter to Ferdinand de Medici in Florence in which he wrote: 'This son of mine is an eagle whose wings are grown; he ought not to stay idle in the nest, and I ought not to hinder his flight. . . . Under the sole escort of his own artistic ability he sets forth to meet whatever opportunities may present themselves for making himself known—opportunities for which it is hopeless to wait in Rome nowadays.'

In 1708 Händel came to Venice and the two men seem to have gone to Rome together for a competition on harpsichord and organ before Cardinal Ottoboni, the generous patron of Corelli. At any rate, the competition took place and Händel was judged the better organist, while the victory for harpsichord was undecided. After this the two young men, of the same age, became warm friends. Händel shortly after established himself in London, but Scarlatti's life was always a wandering one. He was at various times in the service of the Queen of Poland in Rome, as composer

for her private theatre; *maestro da capella* of St. Peter's, where he composed sacred music; in London, producing his operas; in Lisbon; and, finally, at the court of Spain, where he was appointed music-master to the princess of the Asturias. After fifteen years in Spain he returned to Naples, and died there in 1757. He left no money, but his family was provided for by the great singer Farinelli, who, likewise, had been many years at the court of Spain in highest favor.

Domenico Scarlatti's operas and masses are now forgotten, but his fame as a composer for the harpsichord is immortal. What Chopin and Liszt did for the pianoforte music of their day Scarlatti did for music for the harpsichord in his. It has been often said that he was the founder of the pianoforte style. This is true, unless the French composer François Couperin shares the honor with him. Of the brilliant virtuoso style he is unquestionably the founder. His instinct for style and form made no false step, and his music is astonishingly sparkling and fresh when played by modern virtuosi on the modern pianoforte. The works of his French contemporaries, Couperin and Rameau, are unmatched in delicacy and grace and a most refined sentiment; still it may be said that their charm to modern ears consists not a little in an exquisite old-fashioned spirit which breathes from a court life long since ruthlessly stamped under foot, whereas Scarlatti's music compels attention and admiration even to-day by its vigor, flash, and daring. Moreover, it is free as air from all heaviness of rhythm or of contrapuntal intricacies and yet is none the less clear-cut and perfect in form. It is, first of all, virtuoso music. Most of the pieces demand the utmost speed and lightness of touch. Among the most difficult devices he frequently employed is the crossing of hands, by which he obtained instrumental effects hardly less brilliant than those of Liszt. And yet his music is not all empty

display. There is an epigrammatic clearness about it which has the sparkle of all genuine wit, irrespective of the time which gave it birth, and at times there is a masculine touch of poetry, enriched by various expressive harmonies, notably in one, the most famous of his sonatas, that in D minor, which is familiar to all concert-goers in the elaborated form and higher key into which Tausig has transcribed it. Unlike other composers in his day, he did not set four or five pieces together in a suite, but kept his pieces separate, and called each one a sonata or an exercise. Nor did he label any of them with the dainty suggestive names that became the fashion in France and Germany. They are all short and all in the same form. Each is made up of two sections, one of which begins in the tonic and modulates to the dominant, or, if the key is minor, to the relative major; the other from this key back to end in the tonic, frequently by way of contrasting remote keys. Both sections are repeated in their turn. The effect is one of precise balance and clearness. There are generally two quite distinct figures or even themes which are employed in such a way as to suggest the sonata form of later development, the first given at the start in the tonic key, the second in the second part of the first section in the dominant or relative major; and the sparkling liveliness of the pieces depends not a little on the contrast and play of these two distinct figures, their neat and regular arrangement, and the satisfying return of them in the second section of the piece. Such an aptness, such a clear-headed wit is hardly met with anywhere else in music. If the glitter of Scarlatti's harpsichord music is sometimes hard, it is never false. It is the glitter of a diamond, not of tinsel. It has never tarnished. It flashes brilliantly from an age when much was false—clean-cut, polished, impervious, and, in its pointed way, defiant.

Thus in Italy three men sum up the seventeenth century and inaugurate the eighteenth. They were not alone in their day, but their contemporaries, once equally famous, have for the most part sunk into an oblivion from which only the enthusiastic historian recovers them. And even the most gifted of these three, Alessandro Scarlatti, becomes daily less a substance and more a shade, though what there was of intrinsic worth in the Italian opera of that time was developed and adorned by him to stand as a model for Händel, for Haydn and Mozart, and for Rossini and Verdi. Corelli, his friend, and Domenico Scarlatti, his son, built with less perishable stuff and on the foundations which they laid for the branches of music in which they were adept great monuments have been reared. Their genius and their musicianship were less great than those of the elder Scarlatti, but their compositions were of a piece with reality, not, like his, the adornment of a false and meaningless convention. Hence their music still speaks for itself to-day, a language sometimes thin, but in the main clear and strong, whereas others must speak for Scarlatti. In the oratorios of Händel and in the vocal works of Bach the best of what the Italian opera composers of the seventeenth century accomplished was perpetuated, and Scarlatti was unquestionably the greatest of these composers. The seeds of his genius were thus transplanted from the sterile soil in which circumstances had forced him to sow them and they bore fruit in strange forms and alien lands.

So ended the supremacy of the Italians in the history of music. After the death of Scarlatti the Neapolitan opera became wholly trivial. The list of composers is long. Some are distinguished by a certain elegance of style, such as Feo, Vinci, and Cafaro, others by a cleverness in handling the orchestra, such as Durante, and still others, notably Porpora and Leo, were very

great teachers of singing; but for the most part they were all as like as eggs and none added anything of lasting value to music. The comic opera alone had any real life. This, the last creation of the Italians, was powerful in directing the course of music and will be treated in another chapter.

III

What Alessandro Scarlatti did for opera in Italy, Lully had done for opera in France. The French opera, like the English opera, of which we have the one splendid example in Purcell's 'Dido and Æneas,' was of quite distinct origin from the Italian. Whereas the Italian opera sprang from attempts to restore the method of combining music and dramatic declamation, practised by the Greeks, the French opera developed from a form of entertainment that had long flourished in France and was dear to the hearts of the French people—the ballet.

The famous *Ballet-comique de la royne* given in Paris at the Petit Bourbon on the 15th of October, 1581, in honor of the marriage of the Duc de Joyeuse and Mademoiselle de Vaudemont, sister of King Henry III, is in a sense the first attempt in France toward what we now call opera. It was a magnificent spectacle in which songs, choruses, and dancing played a part. The plan of it was made by Baltasar de Beaujoyeaulx, whose real name was Baltasarini, groom of the chamber to the king and the queen mother (Catharine de Medici). The music was by the Sieur de Beaulieu, whose true name was probably Lambert, and another composer named Salmon, and the verses were by one named La Chesnaye. A few excerpts from a contemporary account of the performance will best illustrate what the ballet was. It was given before the king and his mother

and an assemblage of the highest nobles in France. As for the overture the writer of the account says: 'After some measure of silence had been established there came from behind the walls the sound of oboes, cornets, sackbuts (trombones), and other sweet-toned instruments.' After this the Sieur de la Roche, escaping from a garden at the back of the hall, came and delivered an address before the king. He was followed by the sorceress Circe, from whom he had evidently escaped and who was bent on having him back again. But he eluded her and she returned to her garden. Then three sirens and a triton appeared and sang a chorus, which was echoed by singers concealed in a golden arch at the back of the hall. They disappeared and an immense fountain was drawn upon the stage by two sea-horses; and about the fountain twelve naiads were grouped, among whom were ladies of highest rank, covered with gold and jewels. The fountain was drawn round the room, spouting 'real water,' surrounded by eight tritons playing lutes, harps, etc., and by a dozen pages or more bearing lighted torches, all singing. After this chorus, Glaucus and Thetis took their place in chairs at the foot of the fountain and sang a little dialogue to which the Tritons answered in chorus. The fountain was then drawn off behind Circe's garden, and ten violinists came forward, dressed in white satin hung with gold, and played for the first dance which was taken by the twelve pages and the twelve naiads who had returned. Circe appeared, furious, from her garden and laid all the dancers under her spell so that they stood motionless, and then she retired to her garden swollen with victory. Suddenly there was a loud clap of thunder and Mercury appeared, descending in a cloud from which he sang. He then stepped from his cloud and freed the dancers from Circe's spell, whereupon they at once took up the dance again. Mercury went back to his cloud and

Circe came again upon the scene and bewitched not only the dancers, but Mercury himself, whose cloud would not conceal him, so that they all followed her two by two into her fatal garden. And here the garden was brilliantly lit, and the spectators saw walking therein a stag, a dog, an elephant, a lion, a tiger, and various other beasts who were once men, who now had undergone Circe's spell. The first act ended here.

The second act opened with a five-part song for satyrs to which the golden vault replied in echo. A forest advanced across the floor of the hall, a forest with a rock in the middle and oak trees hung with garlands of gold, and four dryads to whom the satyrs sang a song of welcome. The forest went before the king and from its leafy depths a young dryad delivered a speech to him; then the forest turned to the left and proceeded to Pan's grotto. Here Pan welcomed the dryads with a tune on his flute and they complained to him of Circe who had imprisoned not only their playmates the naiads, but Mercury himself as well. Thereupon Pan promised his aid and the wood went away. Entered then the four virtues, two of whom played upon the lute while the other two sang a little duet. The golden vault responded with an instrumental piece in five parts, and then Minerva approached in a car drawn by a huge serpent, Minerva bringing the head of Medusa. She delivered yet another address to the king and invoked Jupiter, who, after a few claps of thunder, descended in a cloud. He stood on his cloud and sang a song, after which the cloud deposited him upon the floor and he went off with Minerva to Pan's grotto. Poor Pan was soundly scolded by Minerva for having let Circe steal away the naiads and Mercury. Pan, though replying that the power to overcome Circe belonged alone to Minerva, none the less started off for Circe's garden followed by eight satyrs armed with knobbed and thorny clubs. Minerva went along, too,

to the assault, but Jupiter was left alone on the stage. Once before Circe's stronghold, that wily lady harangued her assailants and made fun of Minerva and of Jupiter. To Jupiter she said: 'If any one is destined to triumph over me, it is the king of France, to whom you, even as I, must yield the realm you possess.' Minerva and her heroes broke down the door of Circe's garden and Jupiter struck the lady herself with a thunderbolt, who thereupon fell senseless to the floor. Minerva got possession of the magic wand, released those who had been chained by Circe's spell, and at last restored Circe herself, who joined with her to lead a procession of all who had taken part in the play around the hall. Then followed a grand ballet before the king.

This performance of the *Ballet-comique de la royne* lasted five hours and a half and the cost of producing it was more than three million six hundred thousand francs. This was approximately a century before the performance of 'Berenice' in Padua, of which mention has been made in a previous chapter; but whereas the Italian opera degenerated into a scenic display, the French opera resulted from a cutting down of lavish extravagance and uniting the various scenes and choruses with musical declamation.

The ballet remained the favorite diversion of the French court down to the middle of the seventeenth century, though the splendor of this *Ballet-comique* was never reproduced. Though it approached what we now call opera, it remained differentiated from opera in a few fundamental points. Parts were taken by members of the court society, the whole entertainment was planned to flatter the king so that the lines spoken by the players were often directed to the monarch in the manner of Circe's lesson to Jupiter which we have just quoted, and there were long addresses without music and without relation to the plot of the ballet.

In 1645 and 1646 Cardinal Mazarin invited Italian singers to give an exhibition of their opera in Paris. They were coldly received. In Perrin's famous letter to his protector, the Cardinal de la Rovera, April 30, 1659, the Italian music was likened to plain-song and airs from the cloister. Yet it was with the aim of making an opera for the French on the plan of the Italian opera that Perrin wrote his Pastoral in 1659, for which Cambert composed the music. This pastoral in music, called sometimes *L'opéra d'Issy,* was performed at Issy near Paris with great success. There was present such a crowd of princes, dukes, peers, and marshals of France that the whole way from Paris to Issy was thronged with their coaches. There was not room in the hall for all who came. Those who could find no place were patient, promenading through the gardens or holding court on the lawns. By express order of his majesty Louis XIV, the Pastoral was repeated at the palace of Vincennes. So French opera was inaugurated.

Of Cambert, who wrote the music, little is known. He had lessons on the harpsichord from Chambonnières, the Nestor of French clavicinists, he was organist at the Church of St. Honoré, and following the success of the Pastoral he was appointed superintendent of music to Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV. For more than ten years after the Pastoral Perrin and Cambert kept relatively silent. There are a few drinking songs by Cambert which belong to this time, but the two men rest in obscurity until the first performance of their opera *Pomone* on the 19th of March, 1671, at the Tennis Court near the Rue Guénégaud. In 1669 Perrin had obtained from Louis XIV the permit 'to establish throughout the kingdom academies of opera, or representations with music in the French language after the manner of those in Italy.' Perrin secured Cambert to write music for these representations, and

Pomone, their joint product, is the first opera publicly performed in Paris. A great part of their singers had been recruited from churches in the country, but the success of this first performance was enormous. Only the music of one act has been preserved. It is childish, but at moments may stand favorably by that of Lully. What makes it so heavy to our ears are the long passages of dull, unrhythmical recitative which, from the point of view of music, are vague and ill-formed.

To Cambert and Perrin must be given the honor of having established French opera. To them was awarded the first royal warrant to give opera throughout the kingdom. *Pomone* was an auspicious beginning; but within a year trouble had come between the two men, and Cambert's next opera was set to words by another poet, Gilbert, well known in his day. And then, apparently as sequence to the split between Cambert and Perrin, Cambert was himself deprived of his royal rights, the opera was given into the hands of one sole man, who had long been plotting to acquire it, and Cambert departed to England.

IV

This one man, Jean Baptiste Lully (or Lulli), was born in Florence or near there in 1633. He had come to Paris when a boy of twelve or thirteen in the suite of the Duc de Guise, knowing little of music, save the guitar. He had been a kitchen boy in the service of Mlle. de Montpensier, and now, in 1672, was given sole control over opera throughout the kingdom of France. The way in which he won favor with the king shows him to have been an intriguer, and the king to have had little genuine appreciation of music apart from the tunes to which he danced in the court ballets. Lully was at first admitted into the king's band of

violins, and later was made head of a special band. Not only was he a ready composer of dances to the king's taste; he was himself a dancer and a mimic. In Molière's comedy-ballets to which he was commissioned to compose music he often acted with much-admired skill. As to his treatment of Molière the less said perhaps the better. He was a skillful manager, he was always ready with some amusement for the court. From the start he played for the royal favor, and he won it. Not only was he given the sole authority to produce operas in France; Cambert was even denied the right to produce his as well.

Lully had no systematic training as a musician, but he learned from all he came in contact with; from Cambert, who had written music for the ballets; from Cavalli, who came to Paris with his *Xerxes* in 1660; and again with *Ercole amante* in 1662, to both of which Lully was commissioned to set ballets that they might meet with the requirements of French courtly taste. From 1672, when he gained control of the opera, to his death, in 1687, he wrote an opera, a *tragédie lyrique,* every year. His manner of composing, according to Lecerf de la Viéville (1705) was as follows: 'He read the libretto until he knew it nearly by heart; he would then sit down at his harpsichord, sing over the words again and again, pounding the harpsichord; his snuff-box at one end of it, the keys dirty and covered with tobacco (for he was very slovenly). When he had finished singing and had got his songs well in his head, his secretaries, Lalouette or Collasse, came, and to them he dictated. The next day he could hardly remember what he had dictated.'

Lully was a clever, exceedingly intelligent man, a good actor, a good clown, a good dancer, an unscrupulous plotter, an iron disciplinarian. Not only did he write the music to his operas, he superintended and often remodelled the libretti furnished him by Quinault,

the poet of his own choosing. He was indefatigably painstaking. He coached the singers even to the way they should enter and leave the stage, and he drilled the orchestra so that it had a precision, the traditions of which endured for more than a century. He was not a great musician. One may believe that he left the filling out of his harmonies to his secretaries, Lalouette and Collasse. His airs and his choruses are in the ballet style of the century. Only in recitative did he accomplish anything new. He wrote his operas at the same time Racine was producing many of his most famous tragedies—Racine, who was a master of verse and of declamation; and he modelled his recitative according to Racine's art of declamation. The great law of it is that it shall be syllabic, one syllable to one musical tone. Music is here in strict bondage to words. Lecerf says that the recitative as developed by Lully is a just mean between tragic declamation and the art of music. According to L. de la Laurencie * a comparison of Lully's recitative with the recitative of Carissimi or of Provenzale shows that Lully proceeded to a clearing of the Italian technique, cutting from it all the absurd weeds which the taste for *bel canto* and even musical taste in the strict sense had let grow in the garden of melody. We have in the recitative of Lully, then, something that is not music, but a mean between declamation and music. Often stiff and monotonous, it is only rarely impassioned and effective. Always the words, the rhyme and the verse are of paramount importance. In this regard it was so much to the taste of the French audiences, of the *précieux*, that Lully's operas came to be valued far more for their recitative than for their airs. The recitative became not an artificial bond between airs and choruses, but the main burden of the opera, as indeed it should be; and in this respect he is a great reformer

* *Le goût musical en France* (1905).

and akin to Monteverdi on the one hand and Gluck on the other. He is the founder of the admirable French style of declamation. Thus the opera of Lully and the opera of Scarlatti are strikingly different. Both were bound to a strict public convention, but Scarlatti wrote for the *bel canto,* Lully for declamation; the Italians craved the sensuous beauty of the voice in song and let the drama go; the French demanded intelligent declamation, and sacrificed music. Of the two the French opera was essentially more rational and nearer artistic truth, though even in Lully's lifetime it became wholly stereotyped; and neither form as it left the hands of its finisher was capable of further development until infused with new life by a great reformer such as Glück.

To Lully as a musician belongs the credit of having given definite form to his overtures. The so-called French overture as he established it was generally in two parts or movements—the first slow and serious, the second lively and in vigorous, fugal style. Sometimes a third movement recalling the first was added. These overtures were much admired in their day and during the next century, and the form was adopted by most of the German composers as the first movement of the orchestral suite, and by Händel for overtures to his oratorios. Lully seems to have been most successful in instrumental music of a 'noble and martial kind.' Marches from his operas were actually played for soldiers in the field, and 'when the prince of Orange wanted marches for his troops, he had recourse to Lully, who sent him one.' All of Lully's airs and especially his dance tunes have a simplicity and a clearness of outline which secured to them a popularity not forgotten even to-day. It is music easy to remember, vigorous in rhythm and in sentiment, positive and definite, often poor in harmony and grace and never subtle, but on the other hand never vague or

weak. As far as it goes it goes unfalteringly and with a sureness that challenges respect and is at times superb.

After the death of Lully, early in 1687, French opera subsisted upon what he had left it. There was no man to take over his supreme dictatorship and until 1723, when Rameau began to write for the stage, no operas of any influence were written in Paris. Conventional form was too strong even for a man like Charpentier, whose musical gifts seem to have been higher than Lully's. Desmarets, Des Touches and Campra are hardly more than imitators of Lully. Lully stands alone in the history of French opera during the seventeenth century as absolute a despot in the realm of music as his great patron, Louis XIV, over the lands of Europe. He won his place by intrigue, he kept it by an enormous strength of will and perseverance and by shrewd observation of the court taste.

There was no more genuine critical appreciation of music in France during the gorgeous reign of Louis XIV than there was in Italy, Germany or England at the same time. According to M. Combarieu,* there was no more real public than there were true critics —a few wits writing verses and publishing their dislikes or their flatteries, their naïve admiration for banal prowess in virtuosity. The mark of the king is on all music; music for the king's ballets, for the king's opera, for the king's suppers, for the king's fêtes, and above it all the haughty, majestic king. Lully and Racine, Lully and Molière!

V

In salon music courtly elegance shines in miniature. After the death of Lully a young man grew into prominence who was to win from the king his own

* *Histoire de la musique*, Vol. I.

appellation, the Great—François Couperin. He was born of a family of famous musicians in Paris in 1668. From 1693 he was organist to the king in the chapel at Versailles, and in 1696 he was elected organist of St. Gervais, a post which had been held for many years by members of his family; but though he is said to have been an excellent organist, his fame now rests upon his skill in playing and writing for the *clavecin.* He was private teacher to princes and princesses, to the highest ladies of the land, and never by one note did he offend against the precise and elegant etiquette in the midst of which he was formed. He was an exquisite dainty stylist in music, a painter of delicate miniature portraits. Porcelain is not more fragile than his music, nor crystals of frost clearer cut. There is no suggestion of feeling too deep for elegance. A touch of courtly tenderness, a mood of courtly melancholy are the *nadir* of his emotion. His little works for the *clavecin* are masterpieces of form and style. They never suggest the great power of music to express the fire of man's heart and the struggle of his soul.

Lacking the daring brilliance of Scarlatti's sonatas, they are none the less perfectly suited to the thin, frosty instrument for which they were written. For many years they stood as perfect models of harpsichord style and their influence can be traced in the works of all his contemporaries, even in those of J. S. Bach. Four sets of them were printed in 1713, 1717, 1722, and 1730. There are twenty-seven suites or *ordres,* each containing a varying number of little pieces which no longer bear dance names nor emphasize dance rhythms, but are given suggestive, dainty names after the style of Gaultier and Chambonnières. Many of them are portraits of court ladies of the time. *La douce et piquante, La majestueuse, L'enchantresse, L'engageante, L'attendrissante, L'ingénue,* etc. Others affect the fashionable pastoral romance, such

as *Les bergeries, Le barolet flottant, La fleurie, ou la tendre Nanette;* others are bits of delicate realism, *Les petits moulins à vent, Le carillon de Cythère,* etc.; and a few have highly colored names such as *Fureurs bachiques* and *Les enjouements bachiques.* Besides these *ordres* he published transcriptions of works by Corelli and Lully which were called *Apothèse de Corelli,* and *Apothèse de l'incomparable Lully.*

In all his work there is an unblemished purity of style, a charm of melody, a delicate sense of harmony. They are all very highly ornamented with trills, mordants, turns, etc., which often sound too heavy on the modern pianoforte, but which were necessary in music for the harpsichord with its thin tone and lack of all sustaining power. His 'Art of Playing the Harpsichord,' published in 1717, had an enormous influence. A passage of it almost brings Couperin, court clavecinist, before our eyes. These are his directions for having a correct appearance when playing: 'One should turn the body a little to the right while at the harpsichord. Do not keep the knees too close together; have the feet parallel, but the right foot a little forward. One can easily correct oneself of the habit of making faces while playing by putting a mirror on the desk of the harpsichord. It is much more becoming not to mark time with the head, the body, or the feet. One must affect an easy appearance before the *clavecin,* without looking too fixedly at any one object, nor on the other hand looking vague. Look at the audience, if there is one, as if one were doing nothing in particular (this for those who play without their notes).'

Undoubtedly here is a refinement of art which has never since been equalled, a neatness and precision in every detail; but it brought with it a self-consciousness and a suppression of virile emotion, made of music an exquisite toy and of the musician a courtier. Cou-

perin's music suffers more by being played on the modern pianoforte than that of his contemporaries, Scarlatti, Händel, and Bach. The greater sonority of tone clouds the fragile perfect workmanship. There is in it no depth of emotion nor daring brilliance to meet the strength of the new instrument. As music they belong to their time; as works of perfect art they are imperishable.

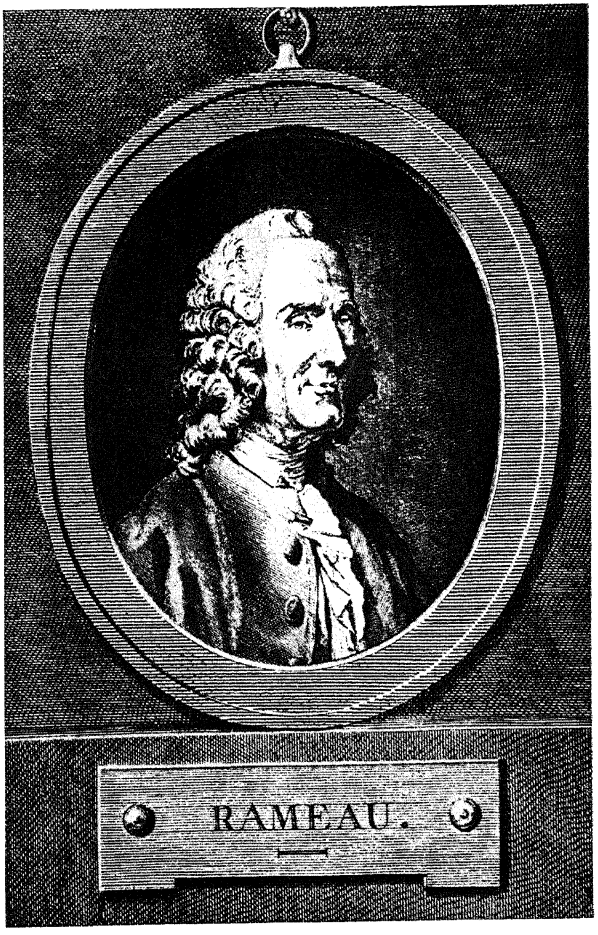
Couperin died in 1733, just as the last and greatest of the French composers of this time, Jean Philippe Rameau, was about to bring out his first opera, *Hippolyte et Aricie*. Rameau was fifty years old. His life had been hard and varied. He had been organist in a provincial town; he had published sets of pieces for harpsichord in Paris; he had published in 1722 a treatise on harmony, the first of his many important works on that subject; he had been engaged in writing ballets for the theatre, and made himself a favorite music-master among ladies of high rank. At the house of La Pouplinière he had met Voltaire and with him had written an opera, 'Samson,' which had been forbidden by the Academy on the eve of its performance. At last, on the 1st of October, 1733, *Hippolyte et Aricie* was produced at the Academy. It brought a storm of abuse upon the composer who had dared to attempt more than a slavish imitation of Lully. He gradually won some respect and continued to write operas, among which *Castor et Pollux* (1737), commonly considered his masterpiece, achieved a marked and continued success. However, no success would silence his detractors. Rousseau made himself the mouthpiece for those who cried him down. And in 1746, just when he had succeeded in overcoming the violent hostility of the Lullists, a company of Italian singers at the *Comédie italienne* won over a half of the Parisian public so that Rameau found himself engaged in another and yet fiercer struggle as defender and head of

French music against the Italian invaders. The malice and brutality of this famous *Guerre des bouffons* are incredible, but the whole affair points unmistakably to a state of society in which all critical judgment had given way to unenlightened prejudiced controversy. Rameau won but a temporary victory. After his death, in 1764, Italian opera was supreme in Paris until the arrival of Glück.

Rameau's operas are æsthetically different from Lully's. Less skillful than Lully in recitative, he far excels him in genuineness of feeling and in harmony. Rameau was a great musician. His studies in harmony were profound and far-reaching in their effect, and the texture of his music was softened and warmly colored by a richness of chords and modulation. His works for the harpsichord are not so polished as Couperin's, but are more virile; and the last set (1736) shows the influence of Scarlatti. What is most striking about him is his independence of court life and convention. Lully was backed by the most powerful monarch in Europe, whose protection assured him success. Rameau had nothing to hope for from the debauched court of Louis XV, in spite of the official royal recognition. He withstood the most venomous attacks alone, and by the courage and power of his own will made himself head and champion of the music of his country.

VI

At the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, Germany was under the influence of the French and of the Italians. In Hamburg there was the nearest approach to a national spirit. Hamburg was one of the most brilliant opera towns, but, whereas in Dresden, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna the Italian opera was supreme and Italian sing-


RAMEAU.

ers and Italian composers held sway, in Hamburg operas were with few exceptions given in German and were furnished by German composers. It must be said, however, that most of the composers were strongly under the influence of the Italians or of Lully, and many of the *libretti* were translations or adaptations of Italian *libretti.* Chief among the composers stands Reinhard Keiser, a man of loose principles and luxurious life, but of extraordinary musical facility. Apart from a great deal of sacred music, he wrote not less than one hundred and sixteen operas. It was while he was at the height of his fame that Händel came to Hamburg.

At Hamburg also was Johann Mattheson, first of all a singer under Keiser, then a conductor and composer. But his compositions have all been forgotten, and he is important now only as the writer of 'Foundations for a German Roll of Honor' and 'The Complete Kapellmeister,' both of which are the source of much that is known about German music previous and up to his time. The Roll of Honor is a series of short biographies of German composers. Living composers were asked to write an account of themselves for it. Bach seems to have been invited to do so and to have declined the invitation. Mattheson is also remembered for his duel with Händel.

The most prolific of all composers in Germany was Telemann, friend of Mattheson and Händel, but of his works nothing is remembered. Of more importance is Karl Heinrich Graun, who was head of the Italian opera in Dresden and Berlin, and whose *Te Deum,* composed after the victory of Frederick the Great at Prague (1756), and *Tod Jesu* are still heard. As precursor of Bach in the St. Thomas school in Leipzig, Kuhnau is of interest. He was a staunch musician of the old school, a man of remarkable learning. In the history of German clavier music he is the most im-

portant figure before Bach. His *Sonata aus dem B* seems to be the first piece of clavier music in three movements not dance tunes. They were published in Leipzig in 1695. In the next year appeared his 'Fresh Clavier Fruit or Seven Sonatas' and after those his 'Biblical Sonatas,' which are surely among the most curious records of music in an age gone by. They are frankly program music. Each sonata consists of a number of little pieces illustrative of some story from the Bible. There are the story of David and Goliath, the story of Jacob and Leah, the story of Saul and David. It was in imitation of them that Bach wrote his only piece of program music, the Capriccio on the departure of his brother to the wars.

J. J. Fux was from 1698 to 1741 a court composer in Vienna, greatly beloved and admired. He is remembered more as a teacher than as a composer, and his text book in the form of dialogues *Gradus ad Parnassum* was for a century one of the standard books on composition.

In Dresden the figure of Hasse, the Saxon, becomes prominent after 1731. He was perhaps the most successful opera composer of his day. Probably not a little of his success was due to the glorious singing of his wife Faustina. Hasse, too, was a friend of Händel and of Bach.

Keiser, Mattheson, Telemann, Graun, Hasse, Kuhnau, and a host of others, all prominent in their day, have been forever obscured by the glory of J. S. Bach and Händel. As we have chosen Purcell, Scarlatti, Corelli, Lully, Couperin and Rameau to represent what the musical genius of England, Italy and France was able to build upon the foundation of Italian experiment in the first half of the seventeenth century, so we must choose Bach and Händel to represent Germany. Germany was a little behind the other nations of Europe to present what the sum of a century was to her. This

was partly owing to the destruction of the Thirty Years War from which she was slow to recover, partly because she had no central capital like London and Paris to foster the best of her native genius. Yet all the experiment, all the enthusiasm, all the labor of the seventeenth century are gathered up in the work of her two great sons; all other composers of all other nations are small beside their genius.

L. H.

CHAPTER XIV

HÄNDEL AND THE ORATORIO

The consequences of the seventeenth century: Bach and Händel—Händel's early life; the opera at Hamburg; the German oratorio—The Italian period, 'Rodrigo,' 'Agrippina,' and 'Resurrezione'—Music in England; Händel as opera composer and impresario—Origins of the Händelian oratorio; from 'Esther' to 'The Messiah'—Händel's instrumental music; conclusion.

In myriad ways the seventeenth century had wrought a mighty task. Founding their practice upon the technique acquired by previous generations, its composers had evolved definite styles of composition, both in the polyphonic and the monodic schools. The demand for greater sonority had caused them to exploit the harmonic resources of music more than before; the perfection of instruments and instrumental technique had stimulated melodic invention and rhythmic variety, and this increased technique had in turn been applied to vocal music, which, beginning with Caccini in 1600, had developed a marvellous virtuosity demanding ever greater means of display. While the old vocal polyphony had largely yielded its sway to the more individualistic art of solo singing, its technique and ideals were preserved in the instrumental forms of chamber music, which, as we have seen, crystallized during the course of the century, and, as the same composers were bound to essay both styles, a union of the two had, in a measure, been effected.

In such a period of transition there was little chance for ultimate perfection; it was an age of innovators rather than masters. Yet the century had produced some great men, too: Alessandro Scarlatti and Arcan-

gelo Corelli in Italy, Lully, Rameau and Couperin in France, Schütz, Froberger, and Kuhnau were men of no small attainments. Their work had sufficient power and charm to gain acceptance for the new styles and to popularize them. But it remained for another generation to bring forth two men great enough to make them survive through posterity, to give them lasting life. Those two men were Georg Friedrich Händel and Johann Sebastian Bach. It is notable that both came of the same spiritual stock, that of the Thuringian church organists—that contemplative, sequestered school of artists,—imbued with a homely philosophy and influenced by the sweet quietude of German domesticity,—which wrought for the glory of God and the uplift of the human soul. Händel * and Bach were born within one month of each other, and within a very short distance, for Eisenach is less than an hour's run from Halle, where Handel saw the light of day, February 23d, 1685. They were as nearly contemporaries, in the literal sense, as men can be—Bach died but nine years before his colleague,—but in spirit they were generations removed from one another. Curious as it is that they never in their life met, though well acquainted with each other's work, we may find a psychological explanation for the fact in that Handel represented the spirit and apogee of his age, summing up the achievements of the generations immediately gone before, while Bach, penetrating into the very essence of the music of past ages, evolved from it a new art that should inspire the musicians of generations to come, that should go surging down through the centuries like a mighty everlasting stream from which the genius of composers could draw continuous inspiration without the danger of exhaustion, an art so great that it had to break all the shackles and

* We shall hereafter adhere to the English spelling of the name, without the *Umlaut*.

restrictions of its time and build for itself a new system, create a new language.

I

Who shall say which of the two men had the greater talent? Their difference is one of character, not of degree. Bach, exploring quietly the resources of his own soul, hardly stirred from his narrow surroundings; Handel, of infinite flexibility and adaptability, appropriated every style, every trick, every brilliant effect he heard, imbuing it with new power. Restlessly he roamed to Berlin and Hamburg, to Italy, and finally to England, everywhere sweeping up in his mighty grasp the achievements of men gone before him, indefatigably composing and rousing a wondering world to new enthusiasms. Bach, unmindful of the public taste, retiring, profound, inexorable; Handel constantly trimming his sails to the wind of public favor, achieving success after success, not by new means, but by using those at his command with the full power of genius. From early youth he felt the stirrings of that genius; before he was seven, indeed, he had taught himself to play upon the harpsichord,—surreptitiously, we are told, for his father, village surgeon at Giebichenstein, near Halle, intent upon the social advancement of his son, was so fearful of his son's developing a 'non-productive' talent that he even refused to send him to school, lest he should learn his notes. Well known is the story of how admiring friends smuggled the harpsichord into the garret, where young Georg would delight his heart in the still hours of the night. No less known, also, are the circumstances of his father's journey to the court of Saxe-Weissenfels, where a son by a former marriage was *valet-de-chambre* to the duke. Young Handel insisted on fol-

lowing the carriage on foot until his father relented and took him to the court, where he came in contact with the duke's musicians and was permitted to play upon the organ. It was at the duke's peremptory advice that the father finally consented to give his boy a musical training. F. W. Zachau, the organist of the *Liebfrauenkirche,* which raises its tall spires in the market-place of Halle, where opposite it we now behold Handel's monument, became his master. For three years he was made to compose a sacred motet every week, by way of exercise. When, in 1696, Handel was sent on a visit to Berlin, he already astounded musicians like Attilio Ariosti by his powers of improvisation, though the famous Bononcini, who was later to become his bitter rival, seems already to have looked upon the boy with suspicion, for he gave him the difficult test of playing a newly composed fugue at sight, which Handel promptly fulfilled. The elector of Brandenburg desired to attach him to his court and send him to Italy for further study, but to forestall this he was summoned to return home, and again placed in charge of the competent Zachau. In the next year his father died, and, obliged to support himself and his mother, he secured, on probation, the post of organist at the *Dom-und Schlosskirche,* at the same time entering the university—that university so closely identified with Protestant theology—as a student.

Handel's nature was not one to tolerate the comparative seclusion and retirement of Halle for long. Moreover, it inclined to a style of music less austere than that of the Lutheran church—so that when echoes of quite a different school, joined to reports of brilliant successes, reached his ears, he gave them ready heed. Such reports came from Hamburg, now the chief stronghold of Italian opera in Germany. In order to explain its existence we must for a moment turn the reader's mind back to the already related importation

of opera into Germany in 1627 and its first exponent there—Heinrich Schütz. This event had been followed by operatic performances—in Italian—at Regensburg (*L'inganno d'amore,* by Ferrari, 1653); Vienna (Antonio Draghi's *Alcindo* and *Cloridia,* 1655); and Munich (Giulio Riva's *Adelaida Regia Principiosa di Susa*). But no further attempt at opera in German was made till the appearance at Hamburg of Johann Teile's singspiel, *Adam und Eva,* in 1678. By virtue of this composer's efforts Hamburg attained the operatic supremacy of Germany. Names now all but forgotten, Johann Förtsch, Johann Franck, Johann Cousser, were staunch pioneers in the cause of German art at this northern output, though their Germanism no doubt suffered a generous admixture of Italian influence. The same is true of the work of the triumvirate of the Hamburg opera—Keiser, Mattheson, and Telemann—which held sway there from the early sixties on. The first of these produced no less than 116, and probably more, operas for Hamburg during 1694-1734. To him especially the opera house owed its word-wide fame—to his work as impresario perhaps more than as composer, for, from *Basilius* (first performed at Wolfenbüttel in 1693 and the next year in Hamburg) to *Circe,* his swan song of forty years after, all the works that were able to arouse enthusiasm in his time are but names to us. Nevertheless Keiser may well count as having placed German opera upon a firm foundation. The style of his works, rediscovered in 1810, is more German than that of his colleagues and, though less remarkable for rhetorical perfection, compares favorably with Lully's in the matter of variety of expression and dramatic truth.

Handel had already met Telemann, Keiser's colleague, who passed through Halle in 1701, and it was not unlikely that he received from that exponent of the operatic style an impulse toward greater melodi-

ousness than he was likely to receive from Zachau. Agostino Steffani, another melodist, also visited Halle in 1703. In the same year we see Handel set out for Hamburg, in order to have himself thoroughly 'made over' under the influence of its famous operatic school. He joined the orchestra of Keiser's Opera House as *violino ripieno,* passing himself off as a novice, but, when Keiser went into hiding from his creditors, Handel promptly took his place at the harpsichord and shone forth as conductor so brilliantly that he was retained upon Keiser's return. Here he also met Mattheson, the brilliant composer and theorist, then slightly older than himself. An anecdote of their early friendship recounts how the two went to Lübeck to apply for an organist's position, but speedily returned when they learned that the new incumbent was obliged to marry his predecessor's daughter. This friendship came to a sudden end when, during a performance of Mattheson's 'Cleopatra,' in which the composer was wont to conduct and also to sing the rôle of Antonio while Handel substituted at the harpsichord. Upon one occasion the latter stubbornly refused to yield his place, after the supposed death of Antonio, to the resuscitated hero, and a quarrel ensued, resulting in a duel in which it is said Handel's life was barely saved by the protection afforded by a brass button.

It was not long before Handel made his own début in opera: both 'Almira' and 'Nero' were produced in 1705. Keiser's influence is felt in these works. They are distinguished by much of the melodious charm which has saved the favorite *Lascia ch'io pianga* from oblivion. This rare gem was originally composed as a sarabande in one of Handel's early chamber works; its use in the opera preludes what was to become a common practice with Handel in musical economy. That Keiser was already jealous of his young rival is evidenced by the fact that he himself reset the libretto of

'Nero' and performed it at the Hamburg opera in place of Handel's.

We may remind the writer at this point that the German opera in Hamburg, despite its many incongruities, was the only opera at that time aiming at dramatic fidelity. Public taste had run to vocalization pure and simple, and singers were the sole arbiters of operatic style. In the Hamburg opera the recitatives, which fully explained the story, were sung in German, while the arias, in the prevailing florid Italian style, were sung in Italian, as the vernacular was not considered a suitable medium for vocal display. The orchestra was a combination of instruments aiming at quantitative rather than qualitative sonority, the string body consisting of two violin parts, and 'cellos and basses playing in unison, while the wood wind—chiefly oboes and bassoons—usually doubled the string parts. What the effect must have been can be imagined when we consider that in one of Handel's operas he used twenty-six oboes, while there were but six flutes, generally used only as an obbligato instrument. The harmonic basis was furnished, as in the oldest Italian operas, by the Figured Bass played upon the harpsichord, which formed the centre of the orchestra. Two other Handel operas were performed at Hamburg during 1705-1706, namely, 'Daphne' and 'Florinda.' In the latter year we already see him on his way to Italy.

In the meantime, however, Handel had essayed another form of composition then popular in Germany—the passion oratorio. The Lutheran church had adopted from the Catholic the practice of reciting the history of the passion at vespers during holy week. This had given an opportunity to composers for a peculiarly profound religious expression in music. Heinrich Schütz must be named as the chief representative of passion music before Bach, though nearly sixty works of similar character have been preserved to us

from before his time. The narrative was divided into three parts representing Christ, the Evangelist, and the people, which originally had been sung in chorus, but, with the rise of monody, the first two were chanted by single voices. Except a few introductory words, the entire text was made up of scriptural narrative, but later the beautiful chorale tunes sung by the Lutheran congregation were interspersed by way of reflective comment. This all became so fast-bound a convention that when Keiser produced his passion set to the words of Menantes at Hamburg in 1704 the church censured him severely for omitting the chorale element. Entirely original music had been used for the passion service, however, as early as 1672 by Sebastiani.

Handel's *Ein kleines Passions-Oratorium,* composed in 1704, was arranged from the Gospel of St. John, into which he introduced contemplative airs, instead of chorales. The chorus is mostly in five parts; the part of Pilate is taken by an alto, Christ by a tenor, and the Evangelist by a bass. He introduces a more elaborate accompaniment for the dramatically heightened *ecce homo* passage, while the biblical speeches are set in aria form. There are also duets, and a fugato chorus is sung by the soldiers casting lots for the vestment. The passion poems written by Brockes about this time were set to music no less than thirty times between 1712 and 1727 and among the most important of these is one by Handel written in 1716 while in attendance upon the elector at Hanover, to which we shall recur later. Suffice it to say that with every new work, such as Keiser's, the dramatic element becomes more prominent. The meditative portions are now allotted to a definite character, such as 'Daughter of Zion,' or a 'Faithful Soul,' to be superseded still later by Mary Magdalen, the Disciple, the Virgin, etc. It may be said, then, to approach more nearly to the form of the oratorio, which, as we have seen in a previous chapter, had been culti-

vated in Italy by Carissimi and his followers. There, however, it had so nearly developed into the prevailing operatic form that it was distinguished from it only by the lack of scenery. The chorus, after being reduced to mere fragments, finally disappeared as it had done in the opera. These were the materials from which Handel's genius was later to evolve virtually a new form of art.

II

It is to Italy that Handel now turns his steps. That country had flooded Europe with singers that won the public's heart wherever they appeared and even the musicians of Germany could not assail their stronghold, reinforced by popular approval. An offer by Prince Gaston de Medici in 1705 had been proudly refused by Handel, unwilling to assume the position of a servant. He now undertook the journey at his own expense, and, visiting not only Florence, but Rome, Venice, and Naples in turn, composed constantly both secular and sacred music. No less than a dozen solo cantatas—those charming little melodic sketches, miniature operas, in a sense, consisting of simple recitative and arioso over a figured bass—were produced at Florence, and upon his return after a short stay in Rome he produced 'Rodrigo,' his first Italian opera. Its overture shows the influence of Lully, being in the form established by that composer (see Chap. XIII, p. 409) and forthwith adopted by Handel for all his operas and oratorios. In this case it closed with a suite of dances, including a gigue, a sarabande, a sailor's dance, a minuet, two *bourrées* and a *passecaille*. The elaborateness of the accompaniments to many of the arias gave evidence of Handel's increased appreciation of brilliant orchestral effects. 'Rodrigo' was an unqualified success, which was as real as it may have been

surprising to Handel. 'Agrippina,' produced in Venice, whither he went in 1708, appealed so strongly to the audience that at every cessation of the music there were loud cries of *'viva il caro Sassone!'* (long live the dear Saxon). This enthusiastic reception of a German composer argues well for the broad judgment of the Italians, whose domination of the European musical world at that time was bitterly resented. But it was not an isolated instance, for twenty years later another German, Johann Adolph Hasse, was similarly honored, and subsequent instances are frequent down to our present day, when the Italian enthusiasm for Wagner is hardly surpassed in Germany itself.

On the other hand, there could have been but little that was strange to the Italian public in Handel's work. All through his Hamburg career he had been influenced by the Italian school. That school had long departed from the ideals of melodic expressiveness and dramatic verisimilitude and was now given over to prescribed conventions made for the benefit of the performer. It had become simply a string of set arias and recitatives alternated in such a way as to provide the desired variety of the vocal exhibition. These rules as summarized by Rockstro,* exacted that there must always be six principal characters—three of each sex. The first woman must be a high soprano, the first man an artificial soprano, though he is the hero of the piece. The second man and the second woman might be either sopranos or contraltos; the third man sometimes was a tenor, and a bass would be included only when four men were in the cast. In each act all the principal singers had to sing at least one of the arias, all of which were in the conventional *da capo* forms. These were the *aria cantabile, aria di portmento, aria di mezzo, carattere, aria parlante,* and *aria di bravura.* There had to be always a duet for the leading man and

* W. S. Rockstro: 'Life of Handel,' p. 62.

woman and an ensemble (*coro*) of all the leading singers at the end.

These limitations are sufficient explanation for the hopeless oblivion into which the operas of this period, including Handel's, have descended. Even of the individual arias only a few are such as to interest or charm the modern listener. A few melodic gems like *Lacia ch'io pianga, Mio cara bene* and two or three more are the sum total that is of value in all this tremendous bulk of operatic works which occupied the greater part of Handel's life. Posterity's verdict is just in these matters, nor need we feel any sense of regret at the loss, when we consider the astounding rapidity with which these compositions were ground out—'Agrippina' had been completed within three weeks—and that the technique acquired in their writing must have yielded richer fruit in those works which remain as the master's monument. Hence we need pass but rapidly over the list of operas, *serenate* and oratorios composed by Handel during this period. All of them lie within the domain of Italian influence. He never attempted to develop the form further or reform it in any way. But, as we shall see later, he used it as the starting point for the new Handelian oratorio, which was the outstanding creation of his genius.

The one important fact of Handel's Italian period is the influence he received from the composers of that country. While there he met Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Lutti, Marcello, Pasquini, Corelli, and Steffani, whom he already knew and who befriended him. In the genial circle of the 'Arcadian' academy, in the homes of the music-loving Marquis Ruspoli and the talented Cardinal Ottoboni in Rome, he absorbed Italian ideals and acquired Italian technique. In Rome, where the performance of opera was forbidden by ecclesiastical authority, he composed *Il Trionfo del tempo e del disinganno,* which he afterward made

over into an English oratorio entitled 'The Triumph of Time and Truth' and another serenata *Aci, Galatea, e Polifemo,* really a cantata for three voices with orchestra, was written in Naples. This work, however, has no connection with the work of a similar name which belongs to a later period.

'Agrippina,' the opera mentioned above, did service in furnishing melodies for an oratorio, *La Resurrezione,* at once an outstanding instance of Handel's transition from opera to oratorio and of his somewhat ruthless practice of using musical material for widely varying purposes. The use of Agrippina's air, both words and music, for the character of Mary Magdalen is little calculated to recommend Handel's early works for devotional expression. But it surpassed in dramatic intensity anything in that form produced so far, for with the Italian melodic suavity Handel combined from the first the rich harmonic sonority peculiar to the Germans, so happily fusing the old polyphonic and new monodic ideals that many of his early works already 'bear,' as Riemann says, 'the stamp of classicism.' It is interesting to note, however, that in *Resurrezione* Handel makes such scant use of his contrapuntal powers that we find but two brief choruses in the entire work. It is an open question whether this oratorio was originally intended for presentation in a theatre, or, minus all action, in a church; nor is it known whether or not it was ever publicly performed.

After a stay of almost five years Handel prepared to return to Germany, for, through the good offices of Steffani, who held the post of kapellmeister to the Duke of Hanover, Handel secured that position as Steffani's successor in 1710. As he had, however, already had several invitations to go to London, then the great stronghold of Italian opera, he accepted his new post only on condition that he might visit that metropolis. He did so in the same year and was so

occupied and so carried away with success that he remained six months. As this is practically the beginning of Handel's English period, we may preface it by a few remarks upon the state of music in England at that time.

III

Following the death of Henry Purcell (in 1695), who had produced thirty-nine English operas, or 'half-operas,' as Chrysander calls them, since they consisted of drama interspersed with 'musical scenes'—music in England had for several years been confined to vocal and instrumental concerts and comic singing and dancing entertainments. Thus the beautiful seed of Purcell's genius had fallen upon barren ground; the promise of an English school of opera which seemed to lie in his work remained unfulfilled. Taste had degenerated to such a degree that the time was ripe for the successful introduction of Italian opera, the 'exotic and irrational entertainment' which Johnson made the subject of his caustic censure. Beginning with 1705 the Drury Lane Theatre and later the Haymarket became the scenes of triumph for Italian singers displaying their art in the degenerate works of their countrymen. With the production of 'Thamyris, Queen of Scythia,' in which airs of Scarlatti and Bononcini were used in arrangements by John Pepusch * there came into vogue

* John Christopher Pepusch (b. Berlin, 1667; d. London, 1752) was not only an able, practical musician, but an authority in theory and musical history. He went to England in 1700 and joined the orchestra of the Drury Lane Theatre, where he became subsequently accompanist and composer. In that capacity he compiled 'English' operas from Italian arias. As founder of the 'Academy of Ancient Music' he made a serious effort toward the revival of sixteenth century music (Purcell, etc.). He was Handel's predecessor as organist to the Duke of Chandos and as such composed services, anthems, cantatas, etc. After writing a number of English operas for the Lincoln's-Inn-Fields Theatre ('Venus and Adonis,' 'Death of Dido,' etc.), he arranged and produced the famous 'Beggar's Opera' (a ballad-opera by Gay), which attained tremendous popularity and created a serious competition to the Italian operas of Handel.

that confusion of tongues which Addison ridiculed in the *Spectator*. After commenting upon the rhetorical absurdities of the erstwhile translations, he says: 'The next step to our refinement was the introducing of Italian actors into our opera who sung their parts in their own language at the same time that our countrymen performed theirs in our native tongue. The king or hero of the play generally spoke in Italian and his slaves answered him in English. The lover frequently made his court and gained the heart of his princess in a language which she did not understand. One would have thought it very difficult to have carried on dialogues after this manner without an interpreter between the persons that conversed together, but this was the state of the English stage for about three years. At length the audience grew tired of understanding half the opera and, therefore, to ease themselves entirely of the fatigue of thinking, have so ordered it at present that the whole opera is performed in an unknown tongue. We no longer understand the language of our own stage, insomuch that I have often been afraid when I have seen our Italian performers chattering in the vehemence of action, that they have been calling us names and abusing us among themselves. . . .' A little further on he says, 'At present our notions of music are so very uncertain that we do not know what it is we like, only, in general, we are transported with anything that is not English, so it be of a foreign growth, let it be Italian, French, or High Dutch, it is the same thing. In short, our English music is quite rooted out and nothing yet planted in its stead.'

This was indeed the state of things when Handel settled in London. No wonder, then, that 'Rinaldo,' composed by him in the space of two weeks to the words of Aaron Hill, the director of the Haymarket Theatre, was a tremendous success. The popularity of the music was such that the stirring march occurring

in the score was adapted by the Life Guards as their regimental march to be used for nearly half a century thereafter. But we are prone to think that the public's enthusiasm was at least equally due to the vocal pyrotechnics of Niccolini Grimaldi, who, as Rinaldo, electrified his hearers in *Cara sposa* and many other splendid arias, and the gorgeous staging, which presented, among other things, a garden filled with live birds. 'Rinaldo' held the boards of the Haymarket for fifteen consecutive nights and was afterward revived in Hamburg and Naples. When Handel returned to Hanover at the close of the opera season his taste for the duties of kapellmeister had evidently been spoiled by his English experience, for he soon applied for and received permission for a second visit, on condition that he return within a reasonable time. He went there in November, 1712, and produced another opera, *Il pastor fido,* which was not so successful.* He was as much admired in other directions, however, as, for instance, when he would play the closing voluntaries at St. Paul's Cathedral upon the invitation of the organist, Maurice Greene, who, it is said, even volunteered to blow the organ so that he might hear Handel play.

Meantime Handel showed no intention to return to Hanover. Upon the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht, March 31, 1713, he was commanded to write music for its celebration by Queen Anne, for whom he had already written a birthday ode in February of the same year. The *Te Deum* and *Jubilate,* largely based on Purcell's composition of that name, which is still being annually performed at St. Paul's, was the result, and he was rewarded by the queen with a life annuity of £200. He had not yet made up his mind to end his somewhat prolonged leave of absence when his patron

* It was followed in January by *Teseo,* which, though more successful, did not warrant many performances. A benefit performance was later given by the company for Handel, who, up to that time, had received no remuneration.

appeared in London as George I of England, for, in the meantime, Queen Anne had died and the Hanoverian dynasty was brought in by the Whigs, to whom the Peace of Utrecht and Queen Anne, both sources of Handel's favor, were most obnoxious. Naturally Handel was now in disfavor at court, but, through the good offices of his friend, the Baron Kielmannsegge, matters were adjusted in this wise. Handel was persuaded to compose a series of short instrumental pieces to be played in a barge following the king during a nocturnal excursion upon the Thames. This 'Water Music' so pleased the king that he inquired as to its composer, and, finding that he was none other than his former kapellmeister, demanded him into his presence to bestow upon him a pension equal to that which he had received from Queen Anne. His engagement as music master to the daughter of the prince of Wales soon brought his income up to £600. In 1716 he accompanied the king on a visit to Hanover and there composed his famous Brockes' passion *Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesus.*

Further impetus for the composition of sacred music came to Handel through his appointment as chapelmaster to the wealthy duke of Chandos, who lived in extraordinarily magnificent style at his palace, Cannons, in Edgeware, where he had built a private chapel after the Italian manner. With a splendid organ, good singers, and competent orchestra at his command Handel was in a position to furnish fittingly magnificent music. Here he composed two *Te Deums* and the twelve Chandos Anthems set for chorus and solos after the style developed since Purcell, in which we may see the root form of the English oratorio soon to follow. The first of these, indeed, followed soon after. It was a setting of a text by Humphrey arranged from Racine's 'Esther.' Much of the music was taken from his earlier Passion, though its former use was radically

different. After its original performance at Canons in August, 1720, when the duke made Handel a present of £1,000 as a token of his appreciation, 'Esther' was performed several times in public. The *serenata* 'Acis and Galatea' also belongs to the Chandos period, which was the stepping-stone to Handel's final and greatest mission, the creation of oratorio. First, however, we must briefly review the remainder of his operatic career.

The Royal Academy of Music, formed for the production of Italian opera, engaged Handel's services in 1719, as well as those of the celebrated Bononcini, who now also took up his residence in London.* As impresario Handel visited Dresden, where Italian opera flourished,† in order to secure a first-class company of singers, among whom were the famous male sopranos Senesino and Berselli, and Signora Salvai. 'Radamisto' was the first opera of Handel's to be performed. It created a sensation which was without precedent in England. It is difficult for us to comprehend the success of this work, dead as it is to-day. Nevertheless,

* Giovanni Battista Bononcini (or Buononcini), son and pupil of Giov. Maria Bononcini (*maestro di capella* at the cathedral of Modena, composer of chamber music, theoretician, etc.), was born about 1660 at Modena, d. about 1750. At first maestro of S. Giovanni in monte, he wrote masses and oratorios, among which are *Davidde, Giosue, La Maddelena a piedi di Christro.* His instrumental works include *Sinfonie* a 5-8 (op. 2, 1685), *Sinfonie* a 3 with Basso continuo (op. 3, 1686), *Sinfonie a piu stromenti* (op. 5), etc. In 1691 he went to Vienna, and, beginning 1694, devoted himself largely to the composition of operas (*Tullo Ostilio, La fedo pubblica, Proteo sul Reno, Polifemo,* etc.), produced in Rome, Vienna and Berlin, where he became court composer to Queen Sophie Charlotte (1703). Before his engagement in London he returned to Vienna and produced a number of new operas, from *Tomiri* (1704) to *Muzio Scevola* (1710). His fame was perhaps second only to Handel's, and the direct popular appeal of his pleasing, simple melodic style fully explains the keen rivalry which ensued between the two. His London operas include *Astarto* (1720), *Ciro, Crispo, Griselda* (1722), *Calpurnia* (1724), and *Astianatte* (1727). His productivity was no less great in chamber music, of which he wrotes *ayres,* various dance movements, *divertimente da camera,* and sonatas for strings and for clavecin. He fell into disrepute in England through the discovery that he had published a madrigal by Lotti as his own—strange as it may seem that his rival's offenses in that direction passed without censure.

† *Cf.* Chap. XV.

the applause was tremendous, the theatre was packed to the doors, and persons were finally allowed to sit on the stage. The critics considered it superior to anything yet seen on an English stage, and Handel himself considered one of its arias, *Ombra cara,* the best he had ever composed. Whatever our opinion to-day, there is no question that many of the forty-odd operas of which 'Radamisto' was the first were far superior to those of any of his contemporaries. Indeed, his star shone so brightly that it dimmed the light of every other upon the operatic firmament of Europe. Two of the operas, 'Rinaldo' and 'Radamisto,' deserve special mention for breadth of conception as well as intrinsic musical value. In these two Handel has reached at least a degree of dramatic power. He has treated with consummate skill the various sources and degrees of human passion and led his audience into a carefully woven web in which they became partakers in the subtleties of anxiety, joy, anger, and pathos. The remaining forty or so we may dismiss with a mere mention. *Floridante* (1721), *Ottone* (1723), *Flavio* (1723), *Giulio Cesare, Tamerlano* (1724), *Alessandro* (1726), *Riccardo, Primo, Re d'Inghilterra* (1727), all produced at the Royal Academy, are simply names to us. They have to-day not even a historical significance.

Of interest because of the story connected with it is *Muzio szevola,* in which the third act was written by Handel, the other two being supplied by his rivals, Ariosti and Bononcini. Ariosti, naturally, was out of the running, but the acts by Bononcini and Handel, both of whom had hosts of partisans, now became the subjects of a heated and general controversy which caught the entire English society in its whirl. The affair reminds of the war of Gluckists and Piccinists which at a later period set all Paris a-flutter, but, while in that case a general principle was at stake, the personal merits of the two composers were the only issue

here. The triviality of the discussion is reflected in the contemporary verse of John Byron, the Lancashire poet:

'Some say, compar'd to Bononcini,
That Mynherr Handel's but a ninny;
Others aver that he to Handel
Is merely fit to hold a candle—
Strange, all this Difference should be
'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee.'

The public soon surfeited of this affair, and, indeed, of Italian opera altogether—the Academy became defunct in 1728. But Handel stubbornly held out. He formed a partnership with Heidegger, the manager of the Haymarket, risked his all, and with mad industry continued to supply an imaginary demand. Late in that year he hurried to Italy, stopping at Halle to visit his old mother, now stricken with blindness, on the way, and incidentally came to know the Neapolitan school of opera at its apogee under Scarlatti. He returned to London with a fresh personnel for the Academy, and during the following four seasons produced 'Lotario' (1729), 'Partenope' (1730), 'Poro' and 'Ezio' (1731), 'Sosarme' and 'Orlando' (1732). Here the venture lagged. Bononcini's open rivalry in another theatre aggravated the situation, and various dissatisfactions, squabbles with singers, etc., which need not occupy us here, resulted in the dissolution of the partnership and the evacuation of the field in the enemy's favor.* After a second trip to Italy another attempt was made by Handel alone, in a theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and later in Covent Garden, where, besides a new version of 'Il Pastor Fido,' 'Terpsichore' and six more operas, he produced 'Alexander's Feast,' composed to the words of Dryden's ode. During 1735 and

* Nicola Porpora (see Vol. II, Chap. I) was made conductor of the rival opera, and as the teacher of Farinelli and nearly all the great singers of the time he was easily able to rally around himself a most formidable force of artists.

1736 Handel was troubled with illness; the following year saw him bankrupt. Cuzzoni, and Faustina, the wife of Hasse, those rivals whom Handel had propitiated by diplomatically composing music for both in one opera that should show their several excellencies without outshining each other; Senesino, the spoiled child of the London public, by offending whom Handel had alienated his aristocratic friends; the wonderful Farinelli, and all the Italian crew left England in disgust. Handel himself, worn out by renewed efforts as composer and impresario, was forced to seek recuperation in Aix-la-Chapelle. After his return he made several more feeble essays at opera, of which 'Imeneo' (1740) and 'Deidamia' (1741) were the last. The failure of the last years was in a measure offset by the success of a benefit concert given in 1738 at the instance of loyal friends. Moreover, the fact that Handel's statue was erected in Vauxhall Gardens at this time—an unprecedented honor for a living man—betokened the high popular regard for his genius.

IV

The glories of that genius were in fact yet to be unfolded in their fullness, and in a field hitherto barely touched. Thoroughly chastened by his late failures, Handel gradually reached the conclusion that 'sacred music was best for a man in failing years.' Chrysander describes how, toward the end of his operatic activity, he began to comprehend his true mission to be 'the union of the entire musical art, secular and ecclesiastic, of the preceding centuries in the form newly created by him (the oratorio).' Whether we are skeptical about the sincerity of Handel's philosophy or not, he certainly had had ample opportunity to feel the public's pulse. As early as 1732 Aaron Hill had written

him urging that 'the English language was soft enough for opera and that it was time the country were delivered from Italian bondage.' That which now fastened Handel's attention upon the oratorio was more than anything else the changing taste of the English public, which primarily meant nothing but a demand for opera in English—a reaction against the incomprehensible Italian warble, and the falseness, the dramatic absurdity of the prevalent school of opera.*

As we have already pointed out, the immediate source of the Handelian oratorio lay in the Italian opera. 'Though externally the course of Handel's career till 1740 was determined by the composition of opera,' says Riemann,† 'in retrospect it appears as a preparation for oratorio, and all his activities resolved themselves into that.'

His previous essays in Italian and in German oratorio (*La resurrezione* and the Brockes' Passion) would seem to portend a fusion of the two forms. Another important ingredient, however, was the sacred music of Purcell, the imitation of which—in Queen Anne's birthday ode, the Utrecht Te Deum, etc.—had led Handel to form a style of choral composition. For the outstanding difference, the distinguishing characteristic of Handel's oratorio is the essential employment of the chorus, which rises to ever greater eminence till at last in the crowning works of the master, in the 'Messiah' and in 'Samson,' we see a grand choral drama interspersed with occasional solo passages. Handel had by that time conceived a choral fabric of such stupendous dimensions as would give the oratorio a place among the grandest art forms in existence.

* We may remind the reader of the valiant efforts made by Dr. Pepusch and other Anglo-Germans against the English public's absolute surrender to the Italian opera and Italian monody, holding out for the more serious contrapuntal music of the sixteenth century, and for the use of the native tongue. The immense success of Gay's 'Beggar's Opera' in 1728 was another proof of this demand for a native popular entertainment.

† *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, II².

The Chandos Te Deums and anthems were the next step in that direction, and 'Esther' represents the foundation upon which the gigantic structure of the later works was raised. It was 'Esther,' indeed, which gave the direct impulse to the most momentous transition in Handel's career. That oratorio, originally composed for the chapel of the duke of Chandos, was revived, with action, scenery, and costume by the children of the Chapel Royal in Westminster. It was twice repeated in a tavern in the Strand, and again performed without authority in April, 1732, 'at the Great Room in Villar's Street, York Buildings,' at five shillings a head. Always alive to business advantages, Handel immediately announced a performance of it at his own opera house for the second of May, 'by a great number of voices and instruments.' The acting of sacred oratorio had been forbidden by the Bishop, hence the advertisement said that 'there would be no Acting, but the House will be fitted up in a decent Manner for the audience.' Handel had enlarged for this occasion the choruses and the orchestration, which now consisted of five violins, viola, 'cello, double bass, two oboes, two flutes, two bassoons, harp, theorbo, harpsichord, and organ—a combination which appears surprisingly modern in comparison with the freak proportions of some of the earlier operas.

The unusual success of the experiment was no doubt responsible for the next effort of this kind, namely 'Deborah,' performed in 1733, at double prices, which circumstance militated against large audiences and fanned the flame of opposition then raging about Handel. In the same year 'Athalia' was produced in Oxford, in which Handel came very near the form of the German chorale cantata. 'Deborah' and 'Esther' were also revived there with success.*

* In 'Deborah' the overture for the first time becomes dramatically identified with the work itself. In it two of the choruses are utilized.

In 'Esther' we divine the spark of Handel's future greatness. In other works, too, there are isolated numbers that touch the high-water mark of beauty, but in the whole of any of these there is little unity; the single numbers do not hang together, the whole scheme does not suggest homogeneity of conception or convey the poignant religious feeling, the purposeful intensity of the later works.

With these qualities we meet for the first time in 'Saul,' composed in 1738. This, says the admiring Rockstro, 'surpasses even the finest scenes presented in either of the three earlier works,' and he enthusiastically appoints to the Song of Triumph in the first act with its picturesque carillon accompaniment, marking out each successive step in the procession, while the jealous monarch bursts with envy, the wailing notes of the oboes and bassoons in the 'Witch's Incantation,' the gloomy pomp of the terrible Dead March, and the tender pathos of David's own personal sorrow, so clearly distinguished from that felt by the nation at large' as some of its dramatic virtues.

'Israel in Egypt,' Handel's next work, is, besides the 'Messiah,' the only purely epic oratorio in which the chorus becomes the protagonist of the drama, and we are inclined to consider these two the greatest of all. That it was in advance of the public taste of the period is indicated by the poor reception accorded to 'Israel' upon its first performance in 1740. It was considered so heavy that it had to be performed the second time with interpolated songs to lighten it up. Despite the fact that it was put together in a total of seventeen days, that it consists to a large extent of the work of other men (sixteen of the thirty-nine numbers are plagiarized), and that it represents another instance of Handel's peculiar handicraft in reutilizing his own creations, it exhibits qualities which hardly any other of his works possesses in so great a measure. Instead of

the stereotyped harmonic structure of dominant-tonic, subdominant-tonic, which stamps so much of his work as tedious and antiquated, we have here rich chromatic progressions and colorful modulations; the clear-cut note-for-note harmony is varied by a seething polyphonic web which eloquently betrays Handel's early fugal training, a polyphony as diverse almost as that of the *a capella* masters of the past, but resting firmly on a pure harmonic foundation, euphonious, sonorous, guided by solid laws of progression, but unrestrained in its freedom of movement. The chorus 'They loathed to drink,' adapted from one of his own organ fugues, is a fine example. It is in moments like these that Handel shows his kinship to his great countryman, Bach. The colossal double choruses in which every resource of vocal polyphony and harmonic power seems exhausted are the most noted features of 'Israel in Egypt.'

Handel's reprehensible practice of appropriating the compositions of other, and often obscure, composers has been much discussed. To a modern artistic conscience there is no excuse for such wholesale theft. How far it was justified by usage we are not able now to determine. At any rate we are surprised at the absence of protest on the part of the composers of the pilfered works. It is true that by utilizing their material Handel often saved such compositions from certain oblivion, and that in handling it his masterful touch was such as to sanctify even dross. Moreover, the original parts are usually far superior to the appropriative ones. The only plausible explanation for the procedure can be found in the feverish haste with which he produced piece after piece, which would indicate an extraordinary rapacity for success—and probably material gain—an unsympathetic trait of character unfortunately associated with others as repugnant.

In 'Israel' a Stradella *serenata* furnished the material

for 'He speaketh the word,' 'But as for his People,' and 'Believed the Lord.' The antiphonal effect desired by Handel was most conveniently provided by the two orchestras in Stradella's work, which represent the two rival parties of musicians serenading the lovers' mistress. 'The Lord is a man of war' represents a most ingenious form of plagiarism, for the voice parts are taken from a work by Erba, but the accompaniment figure is from Urio's *Te Deum.* Such artful utilizations and welding of foreign materials into a homogeneous and impressively artistic whole reveal Handel as the master workman of his time. Many other instances could be cited, but we content ourselves with the pleasant one as disposing of the matter.

Without question, the pinnacle of Handel's creative mission was reached with the next oratorio—'The Messiah'—on which perhaps more than all the other works taken together rests Handel's place in the heart of modern music lovers. That monumental work was produced between August 22 and September 14, 1741, a period of twenty-four days! The compiler of the libretto was Charles Jennens, the quality of whose other literary performances have cast considerable doubt upon his claim to the origination of the altogether admirable plan. His comment on Handel's setting throws light on his conceited nature as well as upon the firm independence of the composer: 'He has made a fine entertainment of it,' says Jennens, 'though not near so good as he might and ought to have done. I have with great difficulty made him correct some of the present faults, but he retained the overture obstinately, in which there are some passages far unworthy of Handel, but much more unworthy of the Messiah!' Posterity has decreed otherwise with respect to the comparative merits of book and music. At any rate, the former is well-nigh ideal in the unity of thought and intensive continuity with

which the story of the Saviour's life is unfolded from the prophecy to the last things.

We have called 'The Messiah' an *epic* oratorio. As there is, as Schering * says, but a series of contemplative choruses, arias, and recitatives on the 'Messiah' idea, its psychological connection with the German cantata is much closer than with the Italian oratorio. As we have observed, Handel had been getting away more and more from the operatic style. Both because of its form and because scriptural words only are used in it, we may, with Riemann, consider it as one great anthem. The work is too well known to require extended comment. Let us only remind the reader of the exquisite beauty of such lyric passages as 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' 'How beautiful are the feet,' and 'Behold and see' which are among the rarest gems of aria form in our possession. Powerful and passionate expressions such as occur in 'The people that walked in darkness' are as rare in the literature of dramatic music, while the highly dramatic recitatives like 'Thy rebuke hath broken' are, without question, one of the completest realizations of the ideal of Peri and Monteverdi.† The glorious choral effects in the Hallelujah chorus, the stirring polyphony, now simultaneous, now imitative, reflect a potency and spiritual elevation that will perhaps never be surpassed. Lastly, let us not forget the beautiful Pastoral Symphony in which the exquisite Calabrian melody, the song of the *piferari* that Handel had heard in the early days at Rome, is introduced.

'The Messiah' was first performed on April 13, 1742, in Dublin, whither Handel had gone upon the invitation of the duke of Devonshire, lord lieutenant of Ireland. It was given for the benefit of a charitable society and was well received. When in March of the

* Arnold Schering: *Geschichte des Oratoriums.*
† Riemann: *Op. cit.*

following year it was performed in London, the audience, including the king, was so affected by the Hallelujah chorus that at the words 'For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth' it instinctively rose. Thus it has remained customary in England for audiences to stand during the performance of that number.

A number of other oratorios followed in regular succession: 'Samson' in 1741, 'Joseph' in 1743, 'Semele' in 1744, and 'Belshazzer' and 'Hercules' in 1744. After an eighteen-months' period of inactivity following another financial crisis, came the 'Occasional Oratorio,' thus named, according to Chrysander, 'because its creation and performances were occasioned by peculiar passing circumstances,' and 'Judas Maccabæus,' 'Joshua' (1747), 'Solomon' (1748). 'Suzanna' (1748), and 'Theodora' (1749). By this time the excessive popularity of oratorio had waned also and 'Theodora' was so poorly attended that Handel remarked bitterly that the Jews (who had patronized his oratorios on Hebraic subjects quite largely) would not come because the subject was Christian, and the ladies stayed away because it was virtuous. Considering the notorious state of Harry Walpole's society we may better understand this jest.

'The Choice of Hercules,' a secular oratorio (1750), and 'Jephtha,' composed in 1751 and performed in the following year, closed the series. During this time Handel was afflicted with a disease which eventually robbed him of his sight. Three operations for cataract were of no avail and he remained blind, or nearly so, for the remainder of his life. (It is a curious coincidence that Bach at the end of his life suffered a similar fate.) Nevertheless he labored on. The practice of playing organ concertos between the parts of his oratorios, which was a regular custom with him, he continued, probably now they were purely improvisations, as, indeed, they had been, with few exceptions,

theretofore. Those which he wrote down seem to have answered the purpose merely of providing material at times when inspiration lagged.

V

Handel's instrumental music is, like Bach's, based on the solid German fugal technique, but, unlike that master's, it is strongly influenced by Italian violin music, and especially by that of Corelli. It is characterized by distinguished simplicity, clearness of outline and terseness of utterance. By virtue of their broad thematic formation and the direct force of their expression, his violin sonatas, trio sonatas, and *concerti grossi* are superior to those of Corelli. He wrote also a number of pieces for the harpsichord, and as early as 1720 had published 'Lessons for the Harpsichord,' which was reprinted in Germany, France, Switzerland, and Holland. Before 1740 he composed no less than twelve sonatas for violin or flute with Figured Bass, thirteen trio sonatas for two violins (oboes or flutes) and bass, six *concerti grossi,* known as the oboe concerti, and five other orchestral *concerti,* twenty organ *concerti,* twelve *concerti for strings,* and many suites, fantasies, and fugues for piano and organ. But it is not evident that he attached great importance to his instrumental works. He regarded them rather as great storehouses of material upon which he drew (as we have seen) at will for his larger vocal compositions.

The last of Handel's labors were the production of the English version of 'The Triumph of Time and Truth' (originally composed in 1708) at Covent Garden in 1757,* and the conducting of the annual performance

* His introduction of choruses in the new version aptly illustrates the metamorphosis which the Handel oratorio underwent, and how indispensable the choral element had by this time become.

of the 'Messiah' at the Foundling Hospital in London. This charitable labor, as well as his support of the fund for helpless musicians and other acts of benevolence, betokens Handel's generosity. He attended another performance of his most popular oratorio at Covent Garden, April 6th, 1759, eight days before his death, which occurred at his house in Brooks Street on the fourteenth of that month. The master was buried in Westminster Abbey among the nation's great. Englishmen may well claim him as one of their own, notwithstanding his German birth and parentage, for not only had he become a naturalized British subject in 1726, but he had entered thoroughly into the spirit of British society and adapted himself to its habits of mind. Throughout its later period his career was closely identified with the British crown. Upon taking the oath of allegiance he became officially composer to the court. As such, upon the coronation of George II in 1727, he composed four great anthems for the occasion, and conducted an exceptionally large orchestra, in which a double bassoon, constructed under Handel's supervision, was used for the first time. Again, in 1737, he wrote a deeply affecting mourning anthem for the burial of Queen Caroline, and, altogether, he came to share in an unusual degree the patriotic veneration of the English people. Moreover, his ideals were in a large measure shaped by English public opinion. It is doubtful, indeed, whether his work would ever have attained its great lasting value had it not been turned away from the channels of Italian opera by the sheer force of popular taste. What his genius would have brought forth had he, like Bach, remained within the local sphere of his birthplace, is an interesting speculation.

* * * * * * * *

Handel's fame increased steadily until the time of his death. Though the opposition against him had lost

much of its force, it was a more or less constant irritation and embarrassment to him till late in his life. His own character, his irascible temper, and his stubbornness no doubt were in a measure responsible for this. But men who are aggressive and successful not uncommonly incur the wrath of jealous rivals, and few men have been as successful as Handel, notwithstanding his repeated failures. He was a big man, built on a large scale both mentally and physically—he rose to heights rarely attained by men of his profession, and it was inevitable that his pride should sometimes go to the length of arrogance. Many are the anecdotes testifying to his tyrannical nature, his ruthless manners, his ponderous pomposity, his abnormal appetite. Some of all that is reflected in his work. We often hear the vain, self-sufficient boor through the interminable roulades and runs, the ponderous chords, the diatonic sonorities of his scores. On the other hand, the man of the world, the successful courtier, the shrewd *homme d'affaires* shines through. As Maitland says, 'Studying all but a very few exceptionally inspired pages of his works we remain conscious of the full-bottomed wig, the lace ruffles, and all the various details of his costume.' *

But those two pages are enough to place him among the greatest of the great. If we can justly say that he sums up the achievement of his own generation of music, as far as it corresponds to the taste of the period, it must not be thought that he passed nothing on to the next. The oratorio, his special gift to the world, will always remain inseparably connected with his name. Had he left nothing but his inspired works in that form, to serve as models for posterity, his claim to immortality would be assured.

C. S.

* Oxford: 'History of Music,' IV, 3.

CHAPTER XV

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Introduction—The life of Bach—Bach's polyphonic skill and the qualities of his genius—Bach's contribution to the art of music and the forms he employed—The revision of keyboard technique and equal temperament—Bach's relation to the history of music.

THAT Bach lived at a time when the musical public was opera mad, when the Italian singers were dictators, when the grace and ease of Italian melody were bewitching and relaxing all music, yet that he himself never wrote for the stage nor ever surrendered in spirit to the force of the new movement, inevitably obscures and misrepresents his relation to the past and present of his day. By the peculiar nature of his genius which has filled his music with a seemingly forever unweakening power to *stimulate,* because of its perhaps unmatched greatness, he will always stand a little above and apart from other composers and will appear unlinked in the slow development of music. Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, even the greatest and most original composers of the present age, all have hailed him as the father of modern music, have drawn inspiration and knowledge from him as from an inexhaustible source, and this unfailing tribute and dependence from nearly all subsequent composers has helped to fix our conception of him as the source and ultimate scope of music. His gift of expression was indeed all-comprehending, if not infinite. The freshness of his music has been judged immortal. He partakes of the superhuman. He seems perfection. Yet one has but to look through the eyes

of devoted historians to see a man human and simple, straightforward, stubborn, sometimes quarrelsome, quite independent, even defiant, and an artist standing as firmly rooted as an oak in the work of his predecessors, thoroughly awake to the music of his day, and drawing in his own fashion many of the features which marked it.

Like Beethoven, he invented no new forms, but took the forms at hand, property common to all composers of his day, and, by his most uncommon genius, gave the touches which transformed them into monuments of imperishable beauty and perfection. But, more than in the case of Beethoven, it was the quality of his own inspiration which gave to these forms their first and last glory. There are symphonies of Haydn and Mozart written ten or a dozen years before Beethoven wrote his first symphony which we can hardly believe will ever lose their hold upon the public, which seem destined to immortal life, for which no apology of time nor circumstance need ever be made; but before Bach there are no fugues, no suites, no cantatas, no settings of the Passion for which such apologies are not necessary, which must not henceforth conceal defect or weakness in the respectable toga of antiquity. This distinction, of course, offers no ground for a comparison of the two men. It is the result of circumstance, of accident.

The seventeenth century, of which Bach and Handel were the two great results, was a period of experiment fraught with more tentativeness and uncertainty than have ever since hindered composers. We need only recall how, before the beginning of that very century, which was to prove the most fruitful of all in the long history of music, the vocal art of polyphony, the consummation of a century of effort, had been shattered into various parts, each of which had almost to begin life anew, to mold itself to strange needs and

surroundings; how the invention of opera had smashed down the last restraining barrier of mediæval scholasticism and let loose a thousand restless composers to wander at will in lands hitherto all but undreamed of. The improvement of the organ and of other instruments, the perfection of the violin had yet to come; the principles of form which should give music a foundation apart from that of a text were yet to be discovered; the modern art of harmony was to develop from the seed; and the vigor of rhythm to be accepted little by little into the constitution of serious music. Music was still either old-fashioned or weak or unsettled to the very day of Bach and Handel. Through them it emerged from its period of probation and experiment, splendid and secure. They therefore appear to the later eye in the glory of creators, and especially Bach, because, for all the vast number and proportions of his choral works, he is fundamentally an instrumental composer and instrumental music was the greatest bequest of the seventeenth century to the future of music.

Only one branch of music had developed relatively independently of the Italian influence—music for the organ. Though this, as we have seen, was given its first impetus by Italian composers, it had grown to its fuller proportions among the Germans, of whom mention has been made in Chapter XI. By the time of Bach organs were well-made and effective instruments, a line of virtuosi in both north and south Germany had developed an astonishing technique, and certain fairly definite types of composition had been established. Of these the toccata, the fugue, and the chorale-fantasy or chorale-prelude received the most attention. The toccata was primarily a piece for display and was looser in structure than the others. Series of brilliant runs, scales and arpeggios over a foundation of rich and varied chords formed the most gen-

eral and characteristic features, with which were alternated, for effect of contrast, passages of slow moving harmony and thematic significance. The fugue was a piece of music developed contrapuntally throughout from a definite subject and countersubjects, the direct outcome of the old imitative polyphonic music of the later Netherland masters. Both toccatas and fugues were treated with great skill and ingenious variety by Bach's predecessors—Buxtehude, Reinken, Böhm, Pachelbel and others—but none of these organists succeeded in giving to either form the perfect balance and proportion, the organic unity, the architectonic grandeur, the definitive outline and shape wherewith Bach wrought them into enduring masterpieces. The same is true of the chorale fantasies and preludes. Three distinct types had come into being before the activity of Bach, one dignified and smooth, consisting actually of several short fugues upon sections of the chorale melody, lacking therefore breadth and power; one singing and serene, in which the flowing melody was set above or below an intricate contrapuntal web; and one in which, in the fiery words of Albert Schweitzer, the chorale melody was torn in fragments and tossed into a rushing torrent of virtuosity. The first of these forms was disjunct, the second lacked variety, the third was out of keeping with the simplicity and noble dignity of the chorale. It was Bach who united what was best in all three into a type of prelude which, inspired by the very spirit of the chorale melody, was built up out of the range of organ technique into a structure of faultless proportion. In the department of organ music, therefore, Bach seized upon the materials gathered for his use by men who had gone before, and, for the first time, made of them perfect temples. He was not misled by experiment, he did not falter through lack of power to sustain; he worked with ab-

solute sureness and with the instinct of only the highest genius for perfect form.

In other instrumental music, in suites for clavier, for violin, for violoncello, for orchestra, in sonatas and concertos, he found forms already perfected. Nor can it be said that he did anything to develop or refine the style suitable for these instruments, since his own style was unmistakably influenced by the organ, and is sometimes heavy in comparison with Couperin's, with Domenico Scarlatti's, with Corelli's, and Vivaldi's. To these branches of music he brought a richness of feeling, an emotional depth and warmth, too, which hitherto had not been expressed in music. Nearly every emotion worthy of expression in music is to be met with in, for example, the Well-tempered Clavichord. On the one hand, liveliness, wit, gaiety; on the other, melancholy, deep sadness, religious exaltation, the lightest, the most serious shades of feeling, the most vivid and the most subdued expression. Thus the equable cool forms of Corelli, so justly proportioned between grace and calm emotion, the scintillating sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti, become suffused with a new, a real, personal life and are neither distorted nor dulled, but animated for all time.

As to organ music, he brought the power to construct and to unify, and to chamber music the warmth of his deep feeling. Vocal music—and his vocal works are, with inconsiderable exceptions, for the church—he made sublime by the true spirit of German religion which has found in him its perfect expression. He wrote in forms which were, as we have said, common to all composers of his day. Keiser, Mattheson, Telemann wrote not only in the same forms as he, but actually set many of the same texts. Undoubtedly they were men of inferior genius, but they were, none the less, excellent musicians, and had remarkable control of the technique of composition; and it is almost in-

credible that the stupendous numbers of their compositions are lying forgotten in libraries. Many a phrase, many an aria, and many a movement have a real beauty of form and a grace of content, but they are dead and not likely to be restored. The reason, not to be found alone in the second-rate quality of their genius, is, however, not far to seek. The development of opera in Italy during the seventeenth century influenced the whole course of music over Europe. The enthusiasm for opera spread veritably like wildfire. Forms were invented which were obvious and immediate in their appeal to the general public, and these forms were taken over into church music, even in Germany, where the tradition of a more profound and more fitting style still lingered. Cantatas, oratorios, even settings of the Passion, gave way to the universal demand for dramatic and easily pleasing music, were composed of arias and recitatives, and accompanied by instruments just as operas were. It would be absurd to say that church music could not gain, did not gain, as a matter of fact, by the injection of new and extraneous forms. Some few conservatives, notably the austere Johann Kuhnau, cantor of the St. Thomas school at Leipzig, where Bach was to pass the last half of his life, set themselves deliberately against the new movement. Many clergymen waxed bitter and polemical; but by far the majority of musicians, among them the men above mentioned, hailed the new forms with delight and, always more or less closely associated with the theatre, deliberately tried to give to church music the glamour and brilliance of music for the stage. Bach was himself far too much aware of the drift of music in his own day not to take advantage of the new forms which were the outgrowth of the opera. He adopted them into cantata, oratorio, and Passion. But whereas the sacred works of Keiser, Mattheson, and

Telemann breathed only the light spirit of the trivial opera of the time, the arias and recitatives of Bach seemed to be the very flower of the meditative religious spirit peculiar to the Teutonic races. Thus his works stand at once with and aloof from his age. Outwardly the same, inwardly different. And that his cantatas and oratorios and Passions, cast in the mold of the Italian opera at the beginning of the eighteenth century, are glowing with the inspiration that was the religious voice of a whole race, is the reason why they live when those of his contemporaries are dead. They brought a trivial style into the church, he made a style glorious by filling it with an intimate, profound, and indescribably tender and genuine devotion. They tried to secularize church music, he to make a secular music the priestess of the temple.

Grandeur of conception, warmth and depth of feeling, nobility and often exaltation of spirit he brought to music, and transformed the materials which were, as the accumulation of a long century, at the service of a hundred of his contemporaries, into masterpieces of imperishable beauty. The cast of his genius seems almost out of place in the general spirit of music at his age. That which makes his music supremely great sprang from out the depths of his own nature, depths which are to-day unsounded and mysterious, the never-failing source of highest inspiration. Famous in his own day as an organist, and a performer on the harpsichord of astounding skill, as a composer he passed unnoticed or misunderstood save by a few pupils and friends. The ideal toward which he worked was fast losing hold upon the world of musicians. He was considered recondite and dry.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

I

It is only human to desire the knowledge of some intimate details in the life of such a man, but the exhaustive researches of Philipp Spitta have collected all that is likely ever to be known about Bach, and there is almost a complete absence of any of those details which help to restore the daily life of a man to the admirers of a later age. We know little more than the facts of his life, must remain onlookers except as we may penetrate to his great heart through his music.

He came of a family which can be traced back nearly two hundred years, all of whom were characterized by the strong virtues of the German peasantry, by thrift, honesty, and a sturdy piety which never wavered among all the horrors of religious warfare. Nearly all were musicians, connected either with the church as composers and organists, such as Johann Christoph and Johann Michael, uncles of Johann Sebastian's father, or with the bands in the towns where they lived, such as Bach's grandfather, and his father, Johann Ambrosius. The family had so spread over Thuringia that there was hardly a town in the province in which some member of it was not actively associated with music. Ambrosius Bach played the viola in the town band of Eisenach. Here Johann Sebastian was born in March, 1685.*

One may believe that his talent showed itself while he was still very young, and that he was intended to follow in the footsteps of his father. Probably he learned from his father how to play the violin. In his father's house, too, he was surrounded by secular music, lively and rhythmical, so that in his very tenderest years he must have acquired that fondness for,

* The exact date is not known.

and appreciation of, rhythm which are so strongly evident in all his work. It seems likely, too, that a preference for instrumental music was fostered in his boyhood, for he remained always primarily an instrumental composer. Just how or when he learned to play the harpsichord is not known, but it can hardly be doubted that he had acquired some skill upon it before his father died.

His mother died in 1694. In little more than half a year his father married again, but died very shortly after. Bach was thus left an orphan at the age of ten, the youngest of a large family. He went to live with his brother Johann Christoph, twelve years or more older than he, in the neighboring village of Ohrdruf. Johann Christoph was an organist, a pupil of the great Pachelbel, and in his house Sebastian first came into close contact with church music, and music for the organ. Here he received his first regular instruction on the organ. Here, too, if we may believe one of the few anecdotes which have colored the history of his life, he gave a sign of that tremendous industry which distinguished his whole life in studying and making his own all the scores that came within his reach. The story is that his brother had a valuable collection of music by Pachelbel, Froberger, and other composers famous in that day, which he kept locked behind the latticed doors of a bookcase. Some of this collection the young Sebastian managed to extract for his own use, and he set to work to copy it by stealth, but one day Johann Christoph caught him at his labor, and took the music away. Whether or not the anecdote is true, it is typical of Bach's method of study. The blindness which fell upon him in the last years of his life was hastened, if not actually caused, by his indefatigable copying of music.

At Ohrdruf he sang in the church choir and thereby gained his first experience in choral music. When at

the end of five years he had to begin to earn his own livelihood, it was as a choir boy he went to St. Michael's school in Lüneberg in the north of Germany. That he had already unusual skill as a musician is proved by the fact that after his voice broke he was still paid to remain at St. Michael's, probably a prefect of the choir. The year at Lüneberg brought him into contact with much fine music. At the church of St. John in the same town George Böhm was organist, one of the most remarkable organists of his day. He was a pupil of the venerable Jan Adams Reinken, one of the disciples of Peter Sweelinck, founder of the brilliant school of North German organists. Reinken himself was still playing at the church of St. Catharine in Hamburg, near by, and Bach went often on foot to Hamburg to hear the great man. About the time Bach left Lüneburg, Handel came to Hamburg to play the violin and the harpsichord in the orchestra at the opera house. The two men never came nearer meeting.

The circumstances under which Bach left Lüneburg are not known. In 1703 he was for three months in the service of Prince Johann Ernst at Weimar. In August of that year he received the appointment of organist at the New Church in the neighboring town of Arnstadt. With this appointment his student days may be said to end; he now steps before the world as a skilled musician. In his new position he had not only to play the organ but to train the choir as well, and also to train a sort of musical society which furnished a large choir for other churches in the town. Hence he had ample opportunity to advance himself still further in the art of playing the organ, and to train his abilities to the composition of choral music. Only a few works can be definitely assigned to this period. A cantata showing signs of youthful endeavor is among them. The complaint of the church consistory that he accompanied the congregational singing in such an

elaborate and complex way as to bewilder the singers seems to prove that he was busy at this time in studying some of the various arrangements of chorales and accompaniments which have come down to us in the mass of his manuscripts. Probably the congregation sang the melody in unison. It was customary for the organist to fill up the pauses at the end of each line with a few flourishes of his own. Doubtless these were oftenest improvised, yet Bach made a special study of the art of accompanying, and wrote down many samples of his own method for the benefit of his pupils. His ardent, independent young spirit must have led him into every kind of experiment during these early years at Arnstadt.

By far the most interesting of his compositions of this time is the little *Capriccio* written on the departure of his brother, Johann Jacob, to the wars. It consists of six little movements somewhat in the style of the Biblical narratives published but a few years before by Kuhnau in Leipzig. To each is prefixed a title or a program, such as the account of various accidents which may befall the brother, the attempts of friends to dissuade him from his journey, their lament when they see that their tears are of no avail, and, at last, the merry song of the postilion, and a fugue on the call of his horn. The workmanship is perfect and the piece breathes the warm, intimate feeling which is peculiar of all Bach's work. It has an added interest in that it is the only piece of program music Bach ever wrote.

In October, 1705, he obtained a leave of absence and went on foot fifty miles to Lübeck to hear the famous Abendmusik which was given on certain Sundays in Advent at the church of St. Mary, where the great Dietrich Buxtehude was organist. No detailed record of his experiences in Lübeck has been preserved; but that he stayed there three months over the leave he

obtained from Arnstadt proves how much he found there to interest him deeply. On his return he was taken to task by the authorities of the church in a council, the records of which have been preserved. To their reproof for having so long overstayed his leave he had only to reply that he had left his work in the hands of a competent substitute who he had hoped would give satisfaction. At the same meeting he was reprimanded for accompanying the congregational singing too elaborately. They complained that he had made his preludes too long, and, when spoken to in that regard, had promptly made them too short, that he neglected choir practice altogether, and that he went to a wine shop during the sermon. To all this Bach replied laconically, that he would try to do better. He agreed to submit an explanation of his general conduct in writing. All through the report one feels the independent, often angry, young spirit held in restraint behind the brief replies. The promised explanation was not forthcoming and in November, 1706, he was again taken to task. This time complaint was added that he had admitted a young maiden to the organ loft, and allowed her to make music there. The young maiden was probably his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach, to whom he was shortly after betrothed.

Conditions at Arnstadt soon became irksome to him, and on June 15, 1707, we find him installed as organist of the church of St. Blasius in Mühlhausen. Here his salary was a little less than fifty dollars a year, to which were added 'some measures of corn, two cords of firewood, some brushwood, and three pounds of fish.' Scanty as it seems, it was evidently enough for him to marry on, and, accordingly, he took his cousin to wife on October 17, 1707. They were married in the village church of Dornheim, near Arnstadt, by an old friend of the Bach family.

Two important records of his stay in Mühlhausen

have come down to us, his recommendation for repairs on the church organ, in which he shows a most thorough understanding of the mechanical part of the organ even to the smallest detail, and his first important composition the *Rathswechsel* cantata composed in honor of the yearly change in municipal authorities, the only one of his choral works which was engraved and printed during his lifetime. It was performed on February 4, 1708.

Bach did not remain a year at Mühlhausen. He received an invitation from Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar to be court organist and chamber musician at a much better salary. The letter by which he notified the council at Mühlhausen of his desire to accept the new post has been preserved.

The nine years Bach spent at Weimar must have been happy and prosperous. The character of the reigning duke influenced his composition. There was no opera at the court and, though there was a band of twenty or more players, in which Bach played both harpsichord and violin, and of which he later became leader, the duke's chief interest was in music for the church, and Bach's most important works during his stay at Weimar were for the organ and for the church choir.

Meanwhile his fame was spreading over Germany. It seems probable that every year he journeyed from Weimar to one or another of the big German cities, on what might be regarded as concert tours. One of them has become specially famous on account of an anecdote which has always been associated with it. In 1717 he was in Dresden at the same time J. L. Marchand, one of the most famous French clavicinists, was there. In some way, quite in keeping with the customs of the day, Bach's friends arranged a contest of skill on the harpsichord between him and Marchand. The outcome is well known. Bach was ready at the

appointed spot and hour. Marchand failed to appear. Whether or not Marchand fled because he feared to be worsted in a contest with Bach is hardly of great importance, but the anecdote is extremely important in that it points to the fact that Bach was already one of the great masters of the harpsichord.

His fame as an organist brought many pupils to study with him, among whom were J. M. Schubart, who may have studied with him in Arnstadt; Caspar Vogler, J. T. Krebs, and J. G. Ziegler. In 1715 he took the son of his brother Christoph into his house, young Bernard Bach, to whose industry we owe the greater part of the valuable manuscript copy of Sebastian Bach's compositions, which passed later into the hands of Andreas Bach. His own family, too, was growing. Both Wilhelm Friedemann, his favorite and most gifted son, and Carl Philipp Emanuel, who became the most distinguished musician of the next generation, were born in Weimar.

His resignation in 1717 from a position where he must have been so happy comes as a surprise. In November of that year he moved with his family to the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, where he had been appointed chapel master and director of the prince's chamber music. Anhalt-Cöthen was a flourishing little community. The prince, himself hardly more than a youth, was generous and free in spirit, fond of art and of music. He played the violin, the 'cello, and the harpsichord, and seems to have been an excellent bass singer as well. His interest was chiefly in secular instrumental music. There was no good organ at the court nor any trained choir of singers, but there was probably a good band, though the names of only a few players have been preserved. Among them is Christopher Ferdinand Abel, whose son, Carl Friedrich, shared with Sebastian Bach's son Christian the high honors of the musical world of Lon-

don in the next generation. Through them the young Mozart was destined to be influenced. It is indeed curious to find the fathers of the two men playing in the same little court band. Just what Bach's duties were in his new position has never been discovered. It was a good appointment and well paid, and he was in high favor with the young prince. But, as Spitta has eloquently written, time has effaced or overgrown almost every trace of his labors, as the grass has overgrown the castle yard which he must so often have crossed, and his name has died out among the people of the place almost as completely as the sounds with which he once roused the echoes of the now empty and deserted halls.

The six years spent at Cöthen were the happiest of his life. It will seem strange to those who think of Bach as a composer of religious music and organ music that he could have treasured in his memory these years at Cöthen, when his energy was directed almost wholly to the composition of chamber music. Yet such was the case. The explanation of this seeming riddle is to be found in his personal character and in the peculiar quality of his genius. For all the independent strength of his will and his intellect, his was essentially a meditative nature, which found its truest expression apart from the public, and in the small intimate forms of chamber music. He delighted in the circle of his family, he delighted in the tender, faint music of the clavichord, which, we are assured, was his favorite instrument. The glory and majesty of his great power are in his music for the organ, the exaltation of his spirit is in the St. Matthew Passion and in the mass in B minor, but nowhere is the essence of his heart so warm, so simple and so unadorned as in the music he composed for clavichord, for violin, and for 'cello while he was at Cöthen.

His life went quietly on there within the court,

broken by occasional journeys such as he was accustomed to take from Weimar. In the autumn of 1719 he passed through Halle, where Handel was staying for a short while with his family, during the trip he made from London to Italy, in search of singers. Bach made an effort to meet him, only to find that Handel had just departed. Later in life he again attempted to see and talk with the world-famous master, and again failed. The two greatest musicians of their time never met.

On the seventh of July, 1720, while Bach was away with his prince, his wife died. Left with four young children, he married again, in about a year and a half, Anna Magdalena Wülker, youngest daughter of Johann Caspar Wülker, court trumpeter at Weissenfels. She was at that time twenty-one years old, intensely musical and was an excellent singer. She was, moreover, skillful with the pen, and helped her husband in copying his own and other music. Her clear, flowing handwriting can be seen in the manuscript copies of the solo violin and violoncello sonatas, and in those of later works. That she worked diligently to master the clavichord is only one of the many instances of her desire to improve her knowledge of music in every way that would help her to follow and assist her husband. She thus became the centre of a home life which must have been in many ways the source of cheer and deep happiness to her husband and her family. How much this meant to Bach as he grew older amid the vexations of his post in the St. Thomas school in Leipzig cannot be overestimated, for, as we have already said, he was at heart a man who withdrew from the bustle of society and the world at large into the intimacy of home life.

The list of works he composed at Cöthen is a long one and momentous in the history of music. Many of them are epoch-making; all bear the marks of his

undying genius in their workmanship, in their perfection of form and of detail, in the warmth of the inspiration that prompted them. Inasmuch as during the six years of his stay there he devoted himself almost solely to the composition of secular instrumental music, the period stands out distinct and unique in his life. What his daily life was, what his actual duties at the court, we do not know; but that they were happy years the music he wrote attests. Moreover, we have his own word written some years later to a friend in Russia that he would have been content to pass the remainder of his days there. But the marriage of Prince Leopold in 1722 seems to have changed the spirit of the court. The young princess had no special fondness for music, and Bach no longer felt himself in congenial surroundings. In 1722 the venerable Johann Kuhnau, cantor of the St. Thomas school in Leipzig, died. Within a year Bach obtained the post, moved with his family to Leipzig, and at the end of May, 1723, was installed in the position which he was to hold until the time of his death.

The St. Thomas school was an adjunct of the old St. Thomas church. It had been founded in the thirteenth century, and up to the time of the Reformation had been under the control of Augustinian monks, but at that time had been taken into the control of the municipal council. Bach was, therefore, in the employ of the town authorities, for the most part men with little knowledge or love of music, with whom he was seldom in good accord. From the earliest times the main purpose of the school had been to train singers for the church of St. Thomas and later for the church of St. Nicholas, but it was a charity school for orphans as well, and most of the boys were unruly. Bach's chief duties were the training of these choir boys and the furnishing of music for the St. Thomas and

St. Nicholas churches. Officially he had nothing to do with the organ in either church.*

Bach was beset by difficulties and unpleasantness on every hand. To begin, the school was disorganized and the boys unruly, as we have said. Nor was music in very high respect there, if we may judge by the prospectus of studies which said that, next to the glory of God, the chief aim of singing was to promote the pupils' digestions. Bach's work with them was not heavy. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday he had to give a lesson in music at nine, and one at twelve, and on Friday one at twelve. On Friday, too, he had to take the boys to church at seven in the morning, and on Saturday at the same time had to expound the Latin catechism to the third and fourth classes. On certain days in the week he had to give a Latin lesson to the third class. On Thursday he was free. The rehearsals of the Sunday music took place regularly on Saturday afternoon. But the boys were frequently in bad condition. It was a custom for them to parade through the streets from time to time at various houses for donations. Their voices were often ruined by colds, and Bach could have had but little pleasure in training such material. Moreover, the spirit of the school had been demoralized by the light Italian music which had gained a foothold through the town opera house, and through Telemann, organist at the New Church, and the boys frequently deserted the school to sing in the musical union which Telemann had organized. However, in the course of a few years Bach got control of the musical union and of music in the famous old university as well, and was thus in a position to train a portion of the inhabitants of the town to an appreciation of his own kind of music.

* Both St. Thomas school and church are still in existence. The boys' choir is one of the finest in Germany and may be heard as in Bach's time every Sunday of the year, in a motet.

From the start he set himself vigorously to reform and improve the condition of music in the St. Thomas and St. Nicholas churches. To this end he tried to get hold of as many singers and as many players as possible. Here he was in constant conflict with the town council, who refused to furnish him with money necessary to engage the boys and men he needed. In August, 1730, he submitted to the council a statement of what material should be rightly placed at his service if he was expected to furnish 'well-appointed church music,' and a brief and very telling account of what he actually had. Concerning the instrumentalists necessary to accompany church cantatas, etc., he writes: 'In all, at least eighteen persons are needed for instruments. The number appointed is eight, four town pipers, three town violinists, and one assistant. Discretion forbids me telling the plain truth as to their ability and musical knowledge; however, it ought to be considered that they are partly inefficient and partly not in such good practice as they should be. The most important instruments for supporting the parts, and the most indispensable in themselves are wanting.' He gives the names of the boys in the school, dividing them into three classes: 'seventeen available, twenty not yet available, and seventeen useless.' The statement was quite ignored by the town council. Up to the year 1746 no additional appropriation was devoted to keeping up the music in the churches of St. Thomas and St. Nicholas. That Bach was angry and embittered by such a disregard is evident in the famous letter to his friend Erdmann, in which he wrote, among other things, that the appointment was by no means so advantageous as it had been described to him, that many fees incidental to it had been stopped, that the town was very dear to live in and the authorities were very strange folks with no love of music, so that he lived under almost constant vexation, jealousy, and persecu-

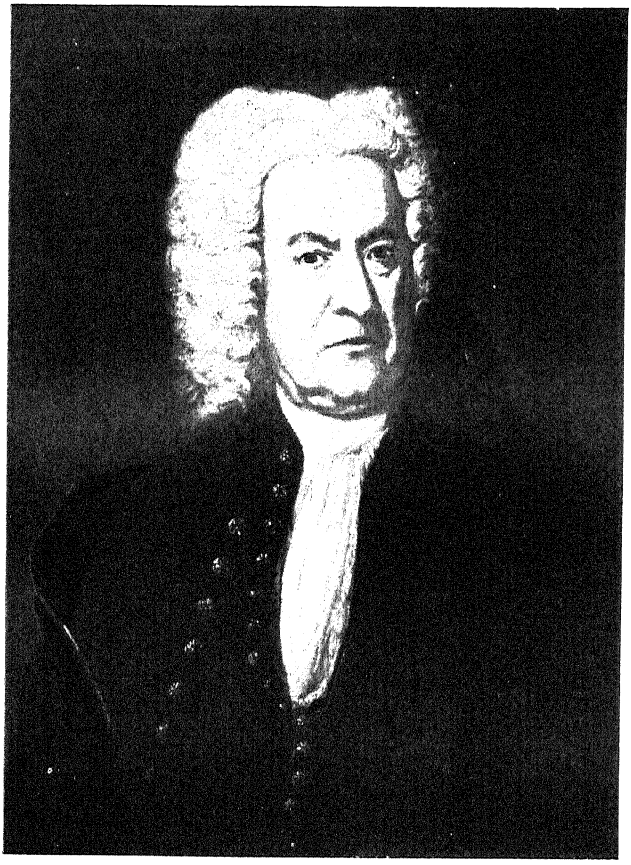
tion; finally, that he felt compelled to seek his fortune, with God's assistance, elsewhere.*

Affairs could not have been quite so hopeless as Bach felt they were. At any rate, he seems to have done nothing more in the way of finding another position. It can hardly be doubted that he would have had no difficulty in doing so had he long wanted to. His fame as an organist was widespread over Germany; and he was a man of firmest determination and no end of courage. He must have decided that the advantages Leipzig offered him outweighed the disadvantages under which the stupidity or indifference of the town council placed him. Moreover, shortly after this affair, in fact, just before the letter to Erdmann was written, a new rector, J. M. Gesner, was appointed to the St. Thomas school, a man who never failed in his appreciation of Bach and sympathy with his aims, and who, most important of all, had the special talent of managing boys, and was able in the few years of his stay in Leipzig to establish order and to put the school upon a new and solid foundation. He probably succeeded in easing the relations between Bach and the town council, and through his efforts Bach was released from giving lessons in Latin and all other general instruction apart from music.

Bach settled in Leipzig. His home life was happy, and varied by the visits of all musicians of prominence who passed through the town. His hospitality and his courtesy were famous. Men journeyed to Leipzig just to hear him play upon the organ. One man wrote in the account of his life which he contributed to Mattheson's *Ehrenpforte:* 'I journeyed to Leipzig to hear the great Johann Sebastian Bach play. This great artist received me most courteously and so bewitched

* This famous letter is printed in full in Spitta's *Life of Johann Sebastian Bach.* It is illuminating in regard not only to Bach's character, but to his family life as well.

me by his uncommon skill that the troubles of the journey were forgotten as nothing.' Quantz, the famous flute player, teacher of Frederick the Great, wrote: 'The admirable Johann Sebastian Bach has at length in modern times brought the art of the organ to its greatest perfection.' Occasionally he went to Dresden to hear the opera or to play for friends there. One chronicle has it that he would say to his favorite son: 'Friedemann, shall we go to Dresden again and hear their beautiful little songs?' In 1736 he was appointed court composer to August III, king of Poland and of Saxony. He retained an honorary position at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen, though Prince Leopold, his former friend and patron, died not long after Bach came to Leipzig. His sons Friedemann and Emanuel grew to manhood and acquired positions. Emanuel was employed at the court of Frederick the Great at Potsdam. Pupils surrounded him, most of whom were not members of the St. Thomas school, but students at the university; and in spite of the fact that on many occasions he showed signs of quick and violent temper, he won not only respect but love from most of them. One of the most famous, Altnikol, married a daughter of the house. At last Frederick the Great, having heard much of his marvellous talent through Emanuel and his pupils, many of whom were playing in the royal band, summoned him to the court at Potsdam. Bach arrived at Potsdam on the 7th of May, 1747, accompanied by Friedemann, and was received with respect by the great king. The story is well known how Frederick, when he heard that Bach was in town, laid aside his flute, which he had taken up for his evening concert, and saying, 'Gentlemen, old Bach is arrived,' sent for him to come at once to the palace. Bach was made to try over the new Silbermann pianofortes, of which the king had several, and the next evening the king desired him to improvise a six-part fugue on a



subject which he was allowed to choose for himself. In all this experience Bach very evidently fulfilled the expectations which had been roused in the king. Upon his return to Leipzig he composed his famous 'Musical Offering,' a collection of pieces in most complicated style, all based upon or related to a theme which the king had given him, and dedicated it to the king. This led to the much greater 'Art of Fugue,' the last great work from his pen. It is made up of fifteen fugues and four canons on one and the same theme, employing the most complicated and difficult counterpoint in the expression of a calm and noble emotion. A good part of it had been engraved on copper plates before Bach died, but not all.

During the last year of his life his sight failed. In the winter of 1749-50 he underwent two operations, both of which were unsuccessful, and he was left totally blind and shaken in health. On July 18, 1750, his sight was suddenly restored, but a few hours afterward he was stricken with apoplexy and he died on Tuesday, July 28, at a quarter to nine in the evening. With him at the time of his death were his wife and daughters, his youngest son Christian, his son-in-law Altnikol and one of his pupils. The funeral was on the following Friday from St. John's church, where the preacher announced: 'The very worthy and venerable Herr Johann Sebastian Bach, court composer to his kingly majesty of Poland and electoral and serene highness of Saxony, chapel master to his highness the prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, and cantor to the school at St. Thomas's in town, having fallen calmly and blessedly asleep in God, in St. Thomas's churchyard his body has this day, according to Christian usage, been consigned to the earth.' It was remarked in a sitting of the town council on August 8 that Herr Bach had been a great musician but not a schoolmaster.

Such are the outlines of Bach's life. It was decidedly

a happy one as lives go. There is much evidence to show that he was impulsive and that he worked at his music with great enthusiasm, but the tenor of his life was even, not erratic, methodical, and simple. It is strange to think of him as a schoolmaster, but such he was for a great part of his life. Though the duties of teaching must have been often irksome, they were relatively light, and in no way demanded so much time or effort as to deprive him of opportunity or enthusiasm to compose. His own report of the condition of the choirs and band at the school can leave no doubt that he never heard his choral works performed in a manner which we should deem at the present day appropriate to their greatness. Probably the two choirs at his service for singing the St. Matthew Passion numbered not more than twelve singers each, and the soloists were members of the choir; he never had a complete band, and the organs at St. Thomas church were bad. There was lax discipline and disorder, too. Still these were inadequacies and improprieties from which most composers of his day suffered. Even the Abendmusik at Lübeck, as fine church music as was likely to be heard in all Germany, was interrupted and marred by the noise of the choir boys racing and capering in the choir loft. Bach was not exceptionally unfortunate in this regard. In material affairs he was relatively well-off; his family life was exceptionally happy and complete, he won the love and admiration of many friends and pupils, and honor from princes.

Of his many children but three boys and a girl long survived him, Wilhelm Friedemann, Carl Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christian, and Regina. Friedemann, the most gifted and the favorite son, became a drunkard, Emanuel and Christian became famous, one in Germany, the other in London. All three are to blame for the fact that their father's widow, all but their mother, fell into abject poverty and dependence upon

public charity. Regina lived to be an old woman, friendless and likewise poverty-stricken until not long before her death, Rochlitz, the publisher, undertook a publication by subscription of her father's works. Among the subscribers Beethoven was the first.

Bach published only a very few works during his lifetime. The majority of his compositions passed in manuscript into the keeping of his sons. Emanuel later brought out many, but much of what fell to the keeping of Friedemann was carelessly lost or sold for a pittance here and there. There is no way of telling how much of the great man's music has disappeared, but the amount which has been preserved is prodigious. As is so often the case among musicians, and, indeed, among most artists, his activity is more or less clearly divided into several periods. Thus the early years at Arnstadt and Mühlhausen are years of experiment and study. In the account of his life the 'Necrology,' which was published by Emanuel in a periodical owned by Mizler and called the *Bibliothèque,* we learn that during these years he frequently spent the whole night in study and practice. During the Weimar period, when he was both organist and player in the duke's band, he came into contact with Italian music, and devoted himself with enthusiasm and evidently untiring energy to the mastery of those principles of clear and lucid form which were at that time exemplified at their best in the violin works of Corelli and Vivaldi. It was a period of great and brilliant works for the organ, probably the toccata and fugue in D minor, which, however, because of its very evident relationship in style and even in theme to works of Buxtehude, may have been conceived earlier; almost certainly the fugue in G minor, the prelude and fugue in A minor, the colossal toccata in F, and perhaps the one *passacaglia.* At this time, possibly largely as a matter of study and exercise, he transcribed concertos

of Vivaldi for harpsichord, mastering thus the form, practically invented by the Italian, which he later used so brilliantly in the Italian Concerta for clavicembalo.

At Cöthen he was cut off from the organ and associated wholly with secular music, and in this period naturally fall the first part of the Well-tempered Clavichord, the French suites, the suites for violin alone and for 'cello, the Brandenburg concertos and the overtures for orchestra. Finally at Leipzig, where he was expected to furnish music for almost every Sunday of the year, he composed his great choral works, about three hundred cantatas, six motets at least, the Christmas and Easter oratorios, the Magnificats, the great mass in B minor, and shorter masses, and four settings of the Passion, of which that according to St. Matthew is perhaps the most sublime of his works and the perfect expression of his genius. Instrumental works also belong to this period, marked by maturity and calm, a broadening of form, an alienation from the lucid conciseness of the Italian and French styles. There are, for example, the prelude and fugue for organ in E-flat major, the English suites and the second part of the Well-tempered Clavichord for clavier, the overture *à la manière française,* the 'Musical Offering,' and the 'Art of Fugue.'

II

Within the limits of a single chapter there is no space to discuss these great works in detail, nor to point to the ways in which Bach's genius manifested itself in each of them. We shall, therefore, give a brief analysis of that genius in general and then proceed to show the position Bach occupies in the course of the development of music.

Bach's skill in polyphonic writing is perhaps unequalled both in its minute perfection and in its breadth

and power. It is evident in nearly everything he wrote, be it the simplest of the two-part Inventions or the mighty choruses in the B minor mass, the fugues for organ or the fugues for solo violin. Within the most confined limits or ranging over mighty expanses it still serves his end, marvellously flexible and seeming spontaneous. Yet this skill does not constitute his genius. In general it differs more in degree than in kind from that of his predecessors and his contemporaries. In spite of the rapidly spreading domination of the monodic style, which was the style resulting from the Italian opera, the style of melody and simple accompaniments in chords, the polyphonic style still retained the allegiance of serious musicians, and even, in fact, of those who were less serious. All composers, probably all church organists, in the time of Bach could write fugues, double or single; could even improvise fugues; could write canons; wrote them as a pastime. Such skill was acquired almost in childhood, aided largely by copying volumes of music. Many composers discarded it altogether in writing for the public, many made a false show of it. It was, however, a manner of expression still common to the time, almost an idiom. So, though Bach's skill could amaze even those who had been brought up to write fugues as daily exercise, it appeared to his contemporaries something as a matter of course, and to historians and critics allied with the new schools a positive detriment —a failing. At the present day the idiom in its naturalness is so far lost that our ears can hardly understand it. We no longer listen to polyphonic music without very special training. We do not follow it naturally, almost instinctively. The skill amazes, does not immediately express. It was, of course, thoroughly natural to Bach. But it was no more to him than an art, than, let us say, the art of speech; for he was wont to liken the interweaving of several parts in music to a

conversation upon a given subject. Bach's skill in polyphony is but a manner of speech, most faultless and subtle and powerful. Others acquired the manner, not perfectly, but none had the ideals, the emotions to express which have filled his works with warmth, with vitality, with actual life.

Thus his melodies are beautiful and expressive. Take, for example, the subjects of the fugues in the first part of the Well-tempered Clavichord. Here one might reasonably expect type melodies, mechanical phrases inexpressive in themselves, worthless, except as polyphonic material; the sort of phrases handed on from composer to composer, almost note for note—mere formulas. But one is astonished by the endless variety and freshness. All are original. Even the shortest, those which are hardly more than a kernel of melody, have a distinction, such as the subjects of the very first fugue, in C major, of the serious, indescribably sad figures in C-sharp minor, and E-flat minor, and the exalted, inspired fugue in B-flat minor. A more passionately expressive phrase is hardly to be found in music than that upon which the fugue in G minor is built, a more graceful melody than the subject of the fugue in C-sharp major; more delicate or humorous than those of the C minor and B-flat major fugues. These touches of pure melodic expressiveness are but preludes to the great melodies of the cantatas and the Passion. The melodies *Mein gläubiges Herze* from the Pentecost cantata, 'Only Weep' and 'Have Mercy, Lord' from the Passion according to St. Matthew are no more conspicuous than many others for their expanse and the depth of feeling which breathes in them. The grace of certain melodies in the suites for violin and for 'cello alone are captivating, the aria for the G string from the second orchestral suite most profound; and there is a type of melody especially dear to him, such as is found in the middle movement of the sonatas and con-

certos for violin, wonderfully free, rhapsodical, as though improvised. In general he avoided the elaborate, ornamental roulades characteristic of the Italian aria, even when writing in that form. In the few cases in which he did employ them they are expressive and gently realistic. In all his work there is evidence of a melodic genius of the purest kind, often not vocal, it is true, and often wound in a polyphonic web, but astonishingly genuine and inspired.

Though the quality of a great part of the music of Bach is meditative and not seldom mystical, parts of it are conspicuous for their rhythmical lightness and delicacy. Especially the suites for violin and 'cello have a rhythmical animation which is irresistible. The dance movements which compose the last parts of the *Ouverture à la manière française,* and movements in the English suites, depend almost wholly for their charm on the incisiveness and zest of their rhythm. Nor is such sprightliness lacking in the fugues, though in polyphonic music it is usually unemphasized. The fugue in D major in the first part of the Well-tempered Clavichord might be called a fugue in rhythm; the fugue in F minor in the second part, too, is almost wholly guided by a playful rhythm. It is to the music of Bach therefore that one should look to find the polyphonic style set free of its proverbial heaviness and inertia, light and airy as laughter and true wit, strong as the march of an army.

But to harmony more than to all else in music the touch of the genius of Bach brought new life and a splendor that can never grow dull. It is as a harmonist that he stands the father of modern music. His pupils have told us that the first task to which he set them was exercise, not in counterpoint, but in harmonization of simple chorale melodies. If one tries to analyze the difference between a Bach fugue and other fugues it is not to be found in the superior workmanship and

finish, nor, save little, in the melodic and rhythmical inspiration, but in the background of harmony. In harmony lie the mystery and wonder of Bach's imperishable music. It is half the strength of its form. One might well ask what is a fugue without Bach. The seeds of it are in the old vocal polyphonic style, passages in which one voice imitated another at the interval of a fifth or fourth, were perhaps suggested to composers by voices singing the same words in turn; and the device was taken over by organists in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century and used in *ricercari* and *canzone,* with no notion of form and balance; it was used in preludizing to the singing of the congregation, but had no true independent existence apart from the chorale to which it led; it was used as the second part of the so-called French overture. Experimenting in one way or another, composers gradually built up a fairly definite instrumental form of fugue. But the fugues, notably the organ fugues, of even the greatest organists before Bach, lacked logical construction. Buxtehude's were built, as Albert Schweitzer has said, on a principle of *laisser-aller.* There seemed to be no good reason, according to Dr. Hugo Riemann, why any of them should not end or should not go on. It was Bach at last who gave to the fugue perfect proportion and organic unity. Principles of a form in music more clear-cut than any German forms he acquired, as we have said, in Weimar from a study of Italian and French masterpieces, but he based all his forms on a foundation of harmony and to all his works gave proportion and logic sprung from harmony alone.

Sir Hubert Parry in his study of Johann Sebastian Bach has demonstrated by careful analysis what a surprising number of preludes in the Well-tempered Clavichord are fundamentally progressions of chords. The name alone of this great series is suggestive, as we

shall later prove. The clearest example of this harmonic prelude is the very first—that in C major. Hardly less clear are the second, the third, the sixth, the fifteenth, the twenty-first, and the twenty-third. Practically all, indeed, are upon the same plan, though in those mentioned the plan is clearest. This is, of course, no invention of Bach. The prelude grew out of a few chords rolled by an organist or player of the harpsichord or lute to claim the attention of his audience. The point is that Bach has made out of these preludes music of ineffable beauty merely by the gift of his genius in harmony. The sequences of his chords may be as modern as Wagner's, chromatic alterations even more subtle; or, as in the organ works, they may move through broad diatonic highways, powerful in suspensions and magnificent in delays. And, as to his power of expression through harmony, let one listen to the recitatives of the St. Matthew Passion, one of the immortal, unfathomable creations of man's genius; consider how they move on phrase after phrase, page after page, bearing the whole weight of a mighty composition and unaccompanied save by a few scattered chords. It may well be doubted if any art has or could have added one touch more of inexplicable, unspeakable beauty to the story of the Passion, save only these few scattered chords of Bach's genius.

III

We have already observed that all great composers from the time of Beethoven have acknowledged Bach as the father of modern music, but this relationship which his descendants have so gladly acknowledged is, on the whole, general and intangible. The reason is partly that Bach invented no new forms, and that the forms which he chose, and the style in which he wrote,

passed out of circulation, so to speak, immediately after his death. The fugue, the cantata, and the Passion he brought to the highest point it was possible for these forms to attain. They have rarely been attempted since with near enough success to suggest even imitation. The fugues of Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms are essentially different from the fugues of Bach. Mendelssohn fell far short of the master whom he, more almost than all others, worshipped. César Franck has been compared to Bach, but is curiously unlike him. The cantata and the Passion grew up to Bach and then stopped: the cantata, because even in the hands of Bach it was an uncouth hybrid, neither opera, which is itself an illogical mixture, nor church music; the Passion, because, as Bach left it, it is as unattainable as the sun. As far as form and outward show are concerned, therefore, Bach's position in the history of music is that of the culmination, the ultimate consummation, of certain styles and forms now obsolete. To understand his appearance in the history of music one must step back into the history of the seventeenth century in German music, a history strangely complicated with that of Protestantism, Lutheran hymns, and cantata texts, inextricably associated with the church and with the organ loft. In the growth of church music in Germany Bach had not one, nor two predecessors. A dozen different courses converged in him. Strangely enough, of the music of the one man before him with whom he might seem related, Heinrich Schütz, he knew little or nothing. All others worthy of the name of composers, however, contributed some share to his development.

All the great organists from the time there were great organists led to Bach, step by step, unmistakably. Every new phase of form, every new device of virtuosity but paved the way for one who was so supremely great as to cast them all into shade or oblivion. All

hymn writers, all composers of chorales led the same way. The Protestant religion found its perfect artistic expression in Bach, not in the cantatas but in the chorale fantasies for organ, the motets and the Passion according to St. Matthew. Catholic art contributed its share. He copied out masses by Palestrina, and by other men now forgotten, such as Lotti and Caldara. For a good part of the Lutheran service, especially at St. Thomas church in Leipzig, was practically Catholic in form. The *Kyrie,* the *Gloria, Credo, Benedictus, Sanctus,* and *Agnus Dei* had their place in the ritual; and, what is more, German composers, and Bach was no exception, seldom troubled to set them to new music but adapted music of the earlier Italian writers to the new German words. The enormous number of cantatas was owing to the fact that the form had grown out of a native German custom of singing hymns between the reading of the *Gospel* and the *Credo,* on the one hand, and the sermon, on the other, and composers were given opportunity to set texts not already time-worn. The history of these texts is one full of sad failures to achieve a truly artistic form, of futile efforts to reconcile chorale and hymn with the new operatic style, of bad verse and trivial, mechanical sentiment. Bach was constantly harassed by problems of text, varying in his choice between an old style Bible text woven with the strophes of the chorale hymns, by far the best though least suited to the operatic style of music which had established itself in the church, and a free text developed from a line or passage in the Bible, consisting of strophic arias and passages for recitative in the so-called madrigal style, a loose versification. The artistic perfection of the Passion is due no little to the fact that he himself supervised the arrangement of the text, the introduction of strophic verse for arias, and madrigal style for ariosos and the chorales.

The history of Passion music leads to Bach, and further than that it cannot go. Way back in the Middle Ages the story of the Passion was chanted in the churches, some time, usually on Good Friday in holy week. The words of the evangelist, of actors in the drama, and of Christ were chanted by a priest or deacon in the monotonous reciting tone, and the choir was given the ejaculations of the crowd. Later the words of Christ, the evangelist, Pilate, Peter, etc., were allowed to different chanters and with the growth of the operatic style the monotonous chant was changed to more expressive recitative. This intrusion of the operatic style was at times bitterly opposed, and the greatest German composer before Bach—Heinrich Schütz—was among the reactionaries, though he had received his training in Italy under Giovanni Gabrieli and Monteverdi himself. However, the influence of opera was too strong for the conservative clergy, and not only did recitative, aria, and dramatic choruses come to play a part in the singing of the story of the Passion, but instruments were introduced into the accompaniment, and the whole became practically a drama. The need for texts suitable for treatment in recitative and aria finally led to versified arrangements of the Biblical narrative itself, as well as to the introduction of strophic stanzas interpretative of the mood or action of the story. A new character, the so-called daughter of Zion, was introduced as a convenient spokeswoman for the congregation.

Such were the theatrical arrangements made by C. F. Hunold, known as Menantes, and by B. H. Brockes, a town councillor of Hamburg, whose arrangement was set to music by Keiser, Mattheson, Telemann, and Handel. Chorale melodies and hymns found no place in these passions. Schütz had employed them at the beginning and the end of his settings, as introduction and epilogue. They were appar-

ently first woven into the body of the work by a little-known composer, Johann Sebastiani, about 1672. The arrangement which Bach finally used for his St. Matthew Passion was a combination of these earlier styles. For the narrative he reverted to the Biblical text, divided among the various characters. He retained the interpretative arias which in the midst of the story dwell for a time on the suffering, on the horror of it all, and their effect upon man; he included among the singers the Daughter of Zion. The chorus was used for the utterances of the crowd, with considerable restraint, and, throughout the work, for richly harmonized chorales which served to draw the congregation into the tragedy even though they were but once or twice given a voice in them. At the beginning and the end massive double choruses, into the first of which a chorale melody was woven, opened and concluded the story. Orchestra and organ made up the accompaniment. All these various elements he combined with unerring sense of proportion and fitness and with no inconsistencies and no histrionic glamour, so that the work stands perfect as a piece of art, and as the purest expression in music of the Lutheran religion.

In his general treatment of the orchestra Bach is allied so much more closely to the past than to the future that in this regard he can be said to have had practically no influence upon his successors. Before his death the Mannheim school, led by Johann Stamitz, was already pointing the way toward a new treatment of the orchestra which was to be taken up and developed by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Bach differs from these later men not so much in a lack of appreciation of tone color as in his forcing all instruments, irrespective of their peculiar capabilities, to conformity in a polyphonic style much influenced by the organ. The result is that trumpets and oboes, for examples, are made to play rapid, agile figures suit-

able only to violin. All instruments are treated in the same way, may be required to take equal and similar parts in the music. This is, of course, distinctly old-fashioned. Purely technical reasons would prevent any composer of the new school from writing for the oboes as he would write for the violins. Sonority and color, too, ousted the old polyphonic ideal. Bach was not, however, deaf to orchestral color. Often in the accompaniments to cantatas and other vocal works the coloring is rich and unusual, and unusual combinations of solo instruments in the Brandenburg concertos seem to show him on voyages of discovery, so to speak, into the effects of combinations of different timbres.

The two series of orchestral works are the Brandenburg concertos and the *Ouvertures,* both written during his stay at Cöthen. The names themselves speak from the now distant past of orchestral music. The name concerto then signified a composition written for a small group of solo instruments, called the *concertino,* accompanied by or alternating with a larger group called the *tutti.* For instance, in the second concerto the solo group is composed of trumpet, flute, oboe, and violin, the *tutti* being in all cases made up of strings. The form is Corellian. The relatively modern treatment of a solo instrument in a concerto, writing for it to show off its special qualities and technical peculiarities, is hardly suggested, *tutti* and *concertino* having to play the same musical material in the same polyphonic style, offering principally contrast between sonority and delicacy; though, as we have said, the element of tone color plays a part. It must be added, however, that the long passage for harpsichord at the end of the first movement of the fifth concerto is very similar to modern cadenzas. The treatment of all parts is consistently polyphonic.

The same is true of the four *Ouvertures.* These compositions are in reality suites, having as the first two

movements the two characteristics of the French *ouverture* invented by Lully, one slow and serious, the other an extended *allegro* in fugal style. The following movements are in dance forms and rhythms. They are scored for the customary brass, wood, and strings, employed here not so much for their specialties as for contrasts of sonority and delicacy.

Bach has not, therefore, contributed in matters of style and form to the development of music after his time nor to the growth of orchestral music, which was the distinguishing feature of the age which followed immediately upon his death. This is due, as we have said, to the fact that the style and forms which were his own inheritance passed out of circulation. In many cases, too, his work was of such unique greatness that no imitation of it could come near enough to suggest more than most vaguely an influence. Copies of his style but emphasize its remoteness, both in time and quality. Certain works must remain forever unique because their peculiar perfection must always keep them in a class by themselves. Among these there are none more striking than the works for solo violin and for solo violoncello, works which have no counterpart in music. Still, we are not limited to intangible influences of melody and harmony in noting the effect which his compositions have had upon his followers. In two ways at least he gave a definite impulse to the course of music; he reorganized the system of fingering keyboard instruments, and invented a satisfactory and universally accepted method of equal temperament.

IV

About the time Friedemann, his first born son, was nine years old Bach began to compose for him the book of pieces known as the 'Little Clavier Book.' It is

what we should call to-day a graded collection of short pieces intended to perfect the already striking abilities of his son. Beginning with the simplest elements, he introduced difficulties by degrees until the last pieces, in polyphonic style, demand a very considerable skill. The most interesting passages are those in which Bach has indicated the fingering, for they prove that he reorganized all the systems of fingering in use in his day and perfected one of his own upon which future developments are based. His chief innovation is in the manner of using the thumb. Up to the time of Couperin, players of keyed instruments used only the four fingers of the hand. The thumb hung idle. The position must have been stiff and awkward and it is hard to understand how such brilliant performers as the north German organists ever overcame the difficulties of it. Yet Bach himself told his son Emanuel that in his youth he had seen great organists play who never used the thumb except for the widest stretches. Couperin's famous book on the art of playing the harpsichord appeared in 1717, the very year Bach went to Cöthen. In it he advocated the use of the thumb, but over the fingers, not under them. Bach was one of the first to appreciate the advantages of passing the thumb under the hand. It is hardly possible that he invented the practice. Many of the oldest works for the harpsichord must have called for a use of the thumb, and the contemporary works of Domenico Scarlatti would have been almost insurmountably difficult without it; but in theory the use of the thumb under the hand was avoided, and Bach's 'Little Clavier Book' contains probably the first open recognition of the advantages of so using it, no matter what the actual practice of virtuosi had been up to that time. One will observe that Bach did not abandon the old system, and that many passages marked by him are to be played in the old way; that is, by passing the

long fingers, chiefly the middle finger, over the short ones; but he laid the foundations of the new. The most famous of players in the next generation was his own son Emanuel, whose book on playing the harpsichord was the standard authority down to the time that the harpsichord was finally supplanted by the pianoforte. Haydn and Mozart undoubtedly profited by it, and thus the methods of the father were spread abroad through the son and played a considerable part in the development of music for the pianoforte.

'The Well-tempered Clavichord' * is unquestionably an epoch-making work. It is, as is well known, a series of preludes and fugues in all major and minor keys. The term 'well-tempered' refers to Bach's method of tuning the clavichord, which for the first time made such an unbounded use of harmony possible. It will be remembered that the first keyboards had only those keys which are to-day white, sounding only the diatonic tones of the modes. The first chromatic alteration allowed in these modes was the B-flat, which was practically forced upon musicians in order to avoid the augmented interval between F and B natural, an interval excruciating to their ears. So the black key between A and B was the first to find its place on the keyboard, and it was tuned in the relation of a perfect fourth with the F below. E-flat seems to have been the next black key and was tuned in the relation of a perfect fourth to the B-flat. The other black keys were added one by one, nearly always in exact relation to some one of the white keys or the original dia-

* The clavichord was suitable only for the most intimate sort of music. It differed from the harpsichord in that the tone of it was produced not by a plucking of the strings but by a pressure brought to bear on them by little uprights attached to the key levers. The tone was very slender but sweet and within its limitations capable of fine shading. A varying pressure of the key produced that tremolo which on the violin is called *vibrato*, and gave the tone a delicate warmth wholly lacking in the clean-cut, frosty tone of the harpsichord—and, indeed, in the rich tone of the pianoforte.

tonic notes of the modes, F sharp in that of a perfect fifth with the B below, G sharp in that of a perfect major third with E, C sharp in the same relation with A. Inasmuch as all these intervals were mathematically exact—and such was the idea of tuning all through the Middle Ages and nearly to the time of Bach—the black keys were in perfect relation only with one or more of the white keys, and often quite out of relation with each other. The intervals between them were very noticeably out of tune and false. When, during the seventeenth century, our harmonic system of transposing keys finally supplanted the old modal system, composers for the harpsichord and the organ still found themselves limited by their keyboards to three sharp keys and two flat, so long as their instruments were perfectly tuned.

A cursory glance at some of the old harpsichord music shows that composers did not by any means submit to such a restriction, and we must presume that, unless they were willing to endure the sound of many hideous imperfections, they developed in practice at any rate some system of tuning which softened or tempered them. Bach, therefore, is not the inventor of the first tempered tuning, but it is doubtful if any composer before him had worked out such a satisfactory system as his which has been called equal temperament, and which amounts practically to the division of the keyboard octave into twelve equal though slightly imperfect intervals. Only the octave remained strictly in tune. The imperfections of the other intervals were so slight, however, as to be hardly perceptible. Thus the black keys of the keyboard came to represent two notes, different in theory, the sharp of the note below and the flat of the note above; and, by such a compromise, composers for the instrument were enabled to modulate freely through all keys. Bach must be acknowledged the first great musician to recognize the

inestimable value of such a liberation, in proof of which he wrote the first series of the 'Well-tempered Clavichord.' The fugues notably are enriched by the most beautiful modulations, and in this regard the collection may be said to be almost the foundation upon which all subsequent music has been built, and to contain the seeds from which the most soaring harmonies of Beethoven, Chopin and even Wagner have sprung. Thus we are brought back by the 'Well-tempered Clavichord' to the crowning glory of his genius, his gift for harmony. Beethoven knew the 'Well-tempered Clavichord.' He is said to have won his first distinction as a pianist by his playing of those preludes and fugues in Vienna. And Beethoven called Bach the forefather of harmony.

Probably no collection of pieces has been so carefully studied and sounded again and again by generation after generation of composers and probably no other set of pieces will ever prove so impervious to every influence of time. It is like an eternal spring, forever fresh, forever marvellous. Scarcely less wonderful are the collections of two- and three-part Inventions. Both these and the preludes and fugues were written as exercises—the one, in Bach's own words, as 'an honest guide by which the lovers of the clavier, but particularly those who desire to learn, are shown a plain way not only to play neatly in two parts, but also, in further progress, to play correctly and well in three *obbligato* parts; and, at the same time, not only to acquire good ideas, but also to work them out themselves; and, finally, to acquire a *cantabile* style of playing, and, at the same time, to gain a strong predilection for, and foretaste of, composition'; the other 'for the use and practice of young musicians who desire to learn, as for those who are already skilled in this study, for amusement.' There can be no better testimony to Bach as a teacher than these short pref-

aces, written in his own fine hand, upon the title pages of the two sets. For him, the greatest virtuoso of his day, virtuosity was nothing, and he taught those about him above all to seek to express only what was genuine and fine in music. So he continues to teach the world of musicians, though music has passed through fire and tempest since he wrote these pieces all but two hundred years ago in the castle at Cöthen. Styles have changed, forms have changed, instruments have changed; the state, the world, are no longer the same; yet in every state and to every corner of the world where there are men and women who have devoted their lives to music, there will Bach be found as the touchstone of all that is good in the art.

V

This is in essence his position at the present day in music, a position unique and special. He will always be the greatest of teachers. His music is profoundly mystical and for this reason the secret of its extraordinary vitality will perhaps never be revealed; and it is nearly always intimate; in this most different from Handel, his great contemporary, with whom he will ever be compared, though the startling contrasts between them lead no nearer to the comprehension or just estimate of either. Handel is outspoken, Bach suggestive; the one compels, the other stimulates.

In conclusion we may once more draw attention to some of the salient points in his genius. As a man he had keen practical knowledge, yet he was impulsive and ardent. He was unshakable in his convictions. He was generous but not always peaceable. And he was always quietly but profoundly thoughtful. Among his friends were men of prominence, knowledge, and

high social rank. The circumstances of his life kept him from the theatre, which was the goal of most composers of his time, but, furthermore, his genius was not of the dramatic kind nor his nature one to seek public acclaim. He was, however, in the words of a contemporary, the prince of all players on the harpsichord and the organ, and was so recognized over a large part of Germany.

His unmatched technique in composition was acquired by constant labor and a never-ending study of all available music, both Italian and French, as well as German, while he remained essentially a son of his race. The works of Couperin were known to him, those of Vivaldi and Corelli, of all the great German organists and composers, save only Heinrich Schütz, of the old Italian masters, Palestrina, Lotti, and Caldara. The forms of his day he mastered, both those of ancient descent and those of more recent make; and he invented no new forms. He was first and foremost an organist, the culmination of a long line of German masters. His music for the organ rises higher than that of any of his predecessors, largely because of the logical harmonic foundation upon which he built it. It has never since been equalled. To music for other keyboard instruments, precursors of the pianoforte, he brought a richness of harmony and of feeling not to be found in such music before his day. The polyphonic forms, especially the fugues, were influenced by the organ style. Other forms, such as the suites, suggest the influence of French writers. The so-called English suites, the name of which has given rise to much discussion, are the greatest suites in existence. The suites for violin and 'cello alone are unique. The polyphonic style in which many movements of them are written is characteristic of German violin music of the time; the conciseness of form, of the Italian masters. All his vocal works show the in-

fluence of the organ style, which was the most natural and most familiar to him, but in these he has incorporated forms such as recitative and *da capo* aria directly from the contemporary Italian opera. Difficulties and improprieties of text affected the cantatas. The Passions, especially that according to St. Matthew, are flawless in structure. The perfection of the latter is largely due to his supervision of and arrangement of the plan and the text. The mass in B minor is his most colossal work, seeming, however, a less natural expression of his genius than the Passion. Preludes, fugues, suites, concertos in the old style, the church cantata and the musical setting of the Passion he brought to their highest point.

After his death other forms occupied composers, so that he has not served as a model. Also, the next age was preëminently the age of the orchestra, the modern orchestra with its peculiar problems, to the settlement of which Bach contributed little or nothing. The sonorous pianoforte persuaded composers from the organ. The polyphonic style was abandoned or was radically modified. Thus the new era of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven is seemingly completely severed from Bach, totally disconnected save for the links of a revised system of fingering for keyboard instruments and a satisfactory method of equal temperament. But the new age was the age of the supremacy of harmony in music and the genius of Bach, often concealed behind the polyphonic fabric of his greatest works, is essentially harmonic. Chords, modulation, chromaticism are the essence of his music. In all his compositions they give the mysterious warmth. They are the basis of his form, the power of his suggestion. That he might be free to modulate at will he so tuned his clavichord that all keys, both major and minor, could mingle through it; and as initiative for his students to the beauties of harmony unrestricted

he composed two series of preludes and fugues in every key which to-day seem an epitome of musical expression. Written for students, they have taught every great composer from Beethoven to Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy. They open the way to his other and to his bigger works, where the lover of music may so lose himself in wonder and deepest joy that he will say, as many have said, here is the beginning and the end of music.

L. H.

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

104 463

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY